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COMMUNISTS AND SOCIAL- DEMOCRATS

Concerning relations
between the two main
political trends in the
workers' movement of
advanced capitalist
countries.

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INTRODUCTION

The modern international working class is represented in the political arena by two principal forces, Communists and Socialists, and an acute struggle between the revolutionary ideology of the Communist Parties and reformism, which pervades the programmes and practical activity of Social Democracy, is a salient feature of contemporary history. This struggle has never been limited to a mere confrontation of

ideas; its course and results have been determined at every stage by the degree to which the antagonists have been able to translate their ideals into reality.

The abolition of capitalism on one-third of our planet, the formation of the world socialist community, and the economic and social achievements of the new social system are the results of the practical application of the revolutionary doctrine. As regards the socio-political practice of reformism, it has proved incapable of undermining the foundations of capitalist exploitation and putting an end to the domination of the monopoly bourgeoisie. This must be one of the reasons why the ideology of Social Democracy does not find fertile soil in the newly independent states, which are searching for the most effective ways of doing away with their economic and social backwardness. The peoples of these countries are aware that they will not cope with the formidable tasks that face them without combating imperialism, and they see from the history of reformism that it cannot serve as a platform and a weapon in this struggle.

However, the contradictions between the Communist and Social-Democratic Parties are not an insuperable obstacle to their joint action in the fight for social change.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union pursues a firm and consistent policy on this question. "In accordance with the line laid down by the 1969 International Meeting," L. I. Brezhnev said in his report to the 24th Congress, "the CPSU is prepared to develop cooperation with the Social Democrats both in the struggle for peace and democracy, and in the struggle for socialism, wit-

hout, of course, making any concessions in ideology and revolutionary principle."¹

As things stand now, this unity is becoming a pressing necessity, and in some cases a decisive condition for success in the struggle of the working class and other working people for peace and social progress.

It is objectively necessary for the Communist Parties dialectically to combine the struggle for unity with effective criticism of opportunism and reformism. This can be done only by strengthening and extending the front of the political organizations of the working class, utilizing the anti-monopoly and anti-capitalist potentialities of the Social-Democratic movement, and working for it to evolve into a consistently class movement of the working people. And this, in turn, calls for a correct assessment of the social nature of Social Democracy, of the factors responsible for its socio-political influence, and the outlook for its future.

¹ 24th Congress of the CPSU, Moscow, 1971, p. 28.

CHAPTER I

**SOCIAL DEMOCRACY:
WHENCE ITS MASS
INFLUENCE?**

Arising as political organizations of the European working class in the last third of the 19th century, Social-Democratic Parties proclaimed socialism to be their ultimate goal, and in the course of several decades they articulated—at least in their programmes—the fundamental interests of the working class. Lenin noted, for instance, that “German revolutionary Social Democracy... came closest to being the party

the revolutionary proletariat needs in order to achieve victory.”¹

In that period, however, the proletariat was not yet faced with the task of seizing power; its aims were to secure tolerable living conditions, recognition and representation in capitalist society, to set up its own organizations, and so on.

Social Democracy spotlighted these top-priority requirements, formulated them in a sufficiently integral programme of reforms, and achieved their partial realization. But it failed to link up the struggle of the working class for its immediate interests with the struggle for socialism, its ultimate goal. The fight for political representation and the defence of the elementary rights and immediate demands of the working class gradually came to predominate in the activity of the Social-Democratic Parties.

In 1914 these Parties had a total membership of 3,400 thousand and an electoral following of approximately eleven million votes. By 1925 their membership had risen to 6,300 thousand. At present it amounts to about 17 million, and more than 75 million people support Social Democrats in elections.

In recent years, however, after half a century of fairly vigorous growth, international Social Democracy has barely advanced, and its influence on the masses is tending to level off, if we discount individual gains (such as the electoral victory of the West German Social Democrats in 1969) and setbacks (the British Labour Party's defeat in 1970) as well as considerable national distinctions.

¹ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 31, p. 34.

At present Social Democracy is the principal mass trend in the working-class movement in the developed capitalist countries,¹ with the exception of Italy and France, where the Communists far outweigh the reformist parties in both membership and mass influence, Finland, where the Communist and Social-Democratic Parties are roughly equal in strength, and the United States, where there are no mass workers' parties at all.

In many countries Social Democracy relies primarily on the industrial proletariat. Socialists enjoy the electoral support of approximately two-thirds of the British workers and the majority of the workers of the FRG, Austria, the Scandinavian countries and a number of other states. A recent development among the adherents to Social Democracy is the growth of the petty-bourgeois element and of the proportion of white-collar workers. These social groups supply more than half of the voters for the French Socialist Party (SFIO), about one-third of those for the Labour Party in Britain, and one-fourth of those for the Italian Socialist Party.

The stability of the influence of the Social-Democratic Parties is in many respects explained by the general evolution of the political consciousness of the population in the developed capitalist countries. This evolution is not a straight line progression, yet a definite long-term trend can be singled out—a gradual contraction of the social base of

¹ Outside this group of countries there exist only four or five real mass and influential Social-Democratic Parties. The other Social-Democratic Parties existing in a number of Asian, African and Latin American countries do not play any significant role in political life.

the Right-wing and conservative groups. In many instances the leftward shift of the masses ideologically and politically is favourable to the Social Democrats. Disappointed with the policy of the bourgeois parties, some sections of the petty bourgeoisie, the intelligentsia and office employees as well as some working-class groups still incapable of taking a consistently anti-capitalist stand, give preference to the Social Democrats as a Left and at the same time quite "moderate" political force.

The influence of Social Democracy also has historical reasons rooted in the concrete circumstances under which mass political organizations of the working class took shape. More often than not, this process is the result of the development of large-scale mechanized production concentrating and uniting considerable masses of the industrial proletariat. It is associated with a rapid growth of the class consciousness and activity of the workers, with their realization of the need to defend the interests of their class in the socio-political arena. In such periods there takes place in the labour movement a swift transition from small sects and circles and separate craft corporations to a mass professional and political organization on a national scale, and the first major gains are made by the working class in the field of social legislation and parliamentary and municipal representation.

The party which in such crucial moments emerges upon the historical arena as the spokesman of the working class may retain its leading role for fairly long periods of time, its influence being consolidated not only by the lasting memory of the first victories but also by the force of political inertia. Generation after generation of work-

ers get accustomed to regarding this party as "our own," and even when discontented with some aspects of its activity, fear lest a changeover to a different party, even if a more militant and consistently class one, should generate divisions and weaken the political strength of their class.

In most West European countries this "right of primogeniture" is enjoyed by the Social-Democratic Parties. To be sure, the ideological and political outlook of many of them has undergone fundamental changes in the decades that have passed since the first congresses of the Second International. The West German Socialist worker does not feel for his party even a fraction of that enthusiasm which inspired his grandfather in the fight against the "exceptional law." However, his conduct continues to be tremendously influenced by the historical tradition.

A real alternative to opportunism—the revolutionary policy of Communist Parties—presented itself when Social Democracy had already struck deep roots in the West European labour movement. As a rule, Communist Parties succeeded in winning over the majority of the working class to their side where the modern industrial proletariat had begun to take shape after the appearance of Social Democracy on the historical scene. This was the case, first and foremost, with the Romance countries of Europe. At the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries most of the working class in those countries, connected as it was with outdated forms of production, was still incapable of assimilating the ideas of political organization and struggle for political power which were enunciated by revolutionary (at that time) Social Democracy. As a result, the revolutionary

aspirations of the worker masses found vent in anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism. During and after the First World War, when the development of large-scale industry and new social experience undermined the historical foundations of anarcho-syndicalist ideology, an opportunity offered for revolutionary workers to choose between Social Democracy and Communism, and they opted for Communism.

The same trend can be traced in individual countries. For instance, in France, the Socialist Party's greatest stronghold is still in the north, where it won a mass following back at the end of the 19th century when it still adhered to revolutionary Marxist views. By that time a concentrated industrial proletariat linked with large-scale production had already formed there and firmly supported the Socialists. Conversely, in the Paris region, where the development of large-scale industry, with the attendant changes in the composition and social make-up of the proletariat, took place at the beginning of the 20th century (i. e. at the time of the formation of the Communist Party), especially strong pockets of Communist influence developed.

By dint of political inertia, radical changes in the comparative mass influence of the various workers' parties can occur especially in times of socio-political upheavals and acute crises and revolutionary situations which play havoc with the traditional political notions of the masses. In France such a situation arose in the Popular Front period and again during the Second World War. Germany was shaken by social storms in the period between the end of the First World War and the early 1930's. In all these instances there was

a rapid growth of Communist influence.

In those countries where fascism held sway for a long time, the old political traditions were undermined, and after the defeat of fascism their revival or replacement by other traditions depended on the situation obtaining at the time. For example, in Italy, the mass anti-fascist and democratic movement of the war and first post-war years put the Communist Party in the position of the principal political organization of the working class. In the Federal Republic of Germany the absence of a mass anti-fascist movement, the country's conversion into the frontline in the cold war, the reign of nationalist and revanchist sentiments, the banning and persecution of the Communist Party considerably strengthened anti-communism and enabled Social Democracy to occupy an almost monopoly position in the working-class movement. The position of Social Democracy was also strong in those countries where socio-political development had been relatively "tranquil" (Britain, Sweden).

An analysis of the historical circumstances that helped Social-Democratic Parties preserve their traditional influence on the working class reveals a connection between these traditions and the socio-economic and political development of the countries concerned. But it does not explain the social roots, the internal reasons for the strength of these traditions. Obviously, broad strata of the working people would not support the Social-Democratic Parties for decades merely from force of habit. Political traditions do not operate automatically, but are consolidated by the real interests of those social groups which adhere to these traditions.

Whose real interests are represented by Social Democracy? Lenin regarded the labour aristocracy and bureaucracy as the chief upholders of reformism in the working-class movement. Despite the changes in recent decades in the status and composition of this section of the workers, this conclusion is still valid. Many high-ranking functionaries of Social-Democratic Parties and reformist trade unions, MPs and municipal leaders have become part of the system of economic and political power of modern capitalism. Hence their active defence of this system, their conscious efforts to prevent it from being shaken by the working-class movement. Opportunist ideology is also finding more or less consistent and conscious supporters among those groups of the working people whose privileged position hinges directly on the social status quo—the junior administrative personnel performing supervisory functions in industry and other economic spheres, part of the highly-paid factory and office workers whose career depends on "good relations with the boss," etc.

However, the labour aristocracy and bureaucracy, a source and active exponent of reformist ideology, cannot ensure its mass influence. In a world where a world socialist system and an international communist movement exist, these groups have lost the ideological monopoly they enjoyed in the working-class movement of some countries half a century ago. Gone are the times when the workers had blind faith in the authority of the Social-Democratic Party and trade union "leaders." Even those of them who actively support Socialist Parties know that a more resolute and consistent (in the class sense) ideology and policy are possible. And although they by no means always espouse

this ideology and policy, this knowledge helps them critically to evaluate the activity of their leaders.

The ideological influence of the labour aristocracy is also being eroded by objective changes in production, in the organization of labour, and in the qualification and structure of the working class. Standardization, the division of labour of skilled workers, and the overall growth of their professional and educational level have obliterated many of the distinctions in the factory-floor position and earnings of different groups of the working class. Formerly a highly-paid skilled worker was often the actual head of a team consisting of less skilled and unskilled workers. Not infrequently the frame of mind and conduct of the workers were determined by the attitudes of the most highly-skilled groups of workers, and when these groups gravitated towards reformism, their authority furthered the propagation of reformist views among the rank-and-file of the proletariat.

Under the present-day conditions in production, many worker groups which formerly had a privileged material and social status have now lost it. The "labour aristocracy," in the traditional meaning of the expression, is disappearing from the scene. In its stead are those sections of the workers which have become the base of the new social policy of bourgeois "neo-paternalism."¹

¹ Neo-paternalism is a peculiar form of socio-economic and psychological influence on a definite part of the working people reflecting the characteristics of the modern scientific and technological revolution as well as the current correlation of class forces.

As distinct from the "traditional" bribing of the labour aristocracy, neo-paternalism aims to influence not only the

But the sphere of action of neo-paternalism is limited, and for this reason it cannot compensate for the consequences of the disintegration of the labour aristocracy and the diminution of its role. The "implantation" of the ideology of opportunism in the minds of the working people is now primarily the business of groups outside the working class (such as party and trade union functionaries, MPs and journalists). In other words, it is carried on, for the most part, by reformist organizations and their propaganda apparatus.

Ideological influence "from without," however

highly-skilled workers. It is most often employed at large enterprises of new industries undergoing rapid technical modernization and growth of production (oil processing and petrochemistry, radio-electronics, some branches of engineering, the munitions industry, etc.). Such enterprises are in dire need of a stable labour force, a "conscientious and devoted" personnel to ensure uninterrupted operation of the costly equipment. To affirm "social peace," to undermine the influence of the trade unions whose activity may disturb this peace is regarded by the management of such enterprises as a vitally important task which is carried out with the help of the policy of relatively high wages and various "fringe benefits" (pensions, seniority extras, housing construction for the workers, canteens, nurseries, kindergartens, etc.).

The material basis of this policy is provided by the high profits received by enterprises of the new industries, where unskilled workers often earn more than skilled workers in the traditional industries. While giving their workers a privileged status, employers try to hammer home to them the idea of the enterprise as "a single working community," to isolate them ideologically from the other groups of the working class. Along with the other forms of the social policy of the bourgeoisie ("human relations," modern methods of remuneration, etc.) neo-paternalism conduces to the dissemination of the ideology of class collaboration among some strata of the working people and thereby strengthens the influence of reformism.

powerful, will not, by itself, convince the rank-and-file worker of the correctness of the reformist views if they are completely at variance with his own experience and interests. Evidently, these views have some roots in the collective consciousness, in the psychology of the working class itself. This was pointed out by Lenin, who noted that "the spontaneous working-class movement is trade-unionism," that trade-unionist policy expresses "the common striving of all workers to secure from the government measures for alleviating the distress to which their condition gives rise, but which do not abolish that condition, i. e. which do not remove the subjection of labour to capital."¹

Lenin's characterization of trade-unionist policy is fully applicable to the policy of the modern Social-Democratic Parties. They express the "common striving of all workers," at times inconsistently and contradictorily, for better conditions, without setting themselves the task of political struggle against capitalism. For instance, the role played by the Social Democrats in the development of the social security system and in the adoption of other measures to improve the material condition of the working people is well known.

Bourgeois critics of Marxism often interpret Lenin's above-quoted proposition to mean that socialist ideology introduced into the working class by the revolutionary intelligentsia has no roots in the consciousness of the proletariat itself and is imposed on it from without. This interpretation is absolutely unfounded. Lenin emphasized that "the working class spontaneously gravitates towards

socialism."¹ The workers cannot by themselves evolve scientific socialist consciousness, but they are deeply averse to exploitation, discontented with their subordinate position in production and in society, and they protest against social inequality. These feelings make up the basis of the anti-capitalist potential of the working class, of the often instinctively felt need for a radical change in social conditions. This gives rise to the spontaneous gravitation of the working class towards socialism.

The Marxist dialectical approach to problems of working-class mentality makes it possible to discern two intertwined trends: the desire for partial improvement of the material and social position attainable under the existing system, and the striving for the complete overthrow of this system. It is the one-sided development of the former trend that creates favourable conditions for the propagation of reformist ideology.

The objective basis for the division of the working-class movement into two trends—revolutionary and reformist—lies in the possibility of disruption of the dialectical interconnection between the immediate and ultimate objectives of the class struggle of the working people. This interconnection can be broken either by the concentration of all efforts on the attainment of the immediate aims of the working class, in total disregard of its ultimate goals, or, on the contrary, by overemphasis on the speediest attainment of the ultimate goals, to the exclusion of the struggle for the everyday needs of the working people. In either instance the result is distortion and then complete abandon-

¹ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 5, pp. 384, 387.

¹ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 5, p. 386.

ment of the revolutionary strategy and tactics of the working-class movement. The only difference is that in the former instance opportunism and reformism gain strength, and in the latter sectarianism and adventurism prevail. Only such leadership of the working class can be regarded as truly revolutionary which ably combines the struggle for the everyday demands of the workers with the struggle for the triumph of socialism.

It is clear from this that the fundamental distinction between Social Democracy and Communism does not lie in the intention of the former to "transform" bourgeois society into a socialist one gradually and by peaceful means. Communists do not reject the possibility of radical change brought about by peaceful means, and do not strive for an immediate socialist revolution. But the Social Democrats turn the struggle for everyday needs, for piecemeal reforms, into an end in itself. They first divorce it from the struggle for the fundamental interests of the working people and then abandon this latter altogether.

Opportunism and reformism are most widespread in the working-class movement when favourable objective conditions are ripe for the struggle for the everyday socio-economic and political demands of the working people, i.e. in periods of rapid economic development of capitalism. There have been two of these periods—one on the borderline between the 19th and 20th centuries and the other in the 1950's and the first half of the 1960's. In some capitalist states such conditions arose, for short periods, in the years between the two world wars. Thanks to a favourable economic situation, the working class, through stubborn struggle, sometimes managed to win considerable conces-

sions. This somewhat blunted the acuteness of the class contradictions, which, in turn, tended to obscure the ultimate goals and to divorce everyday struggle from the struggle for radical change. And if it is borne in mind that these gains were made by the working people of many countries, either during the rule of the Social Democrats or when Social-Democratic Parties and reformist trade unions stood at the head of the organized working class, the reason for the growth of their influence among the working people will become all the more clear.

In a number of countries, where Communists constitute an insignificant minority of the organized working class, even those members of the working class best prepared for assimilating socialist ideas often prefer to support the Social-Democratic Parties, considering that these parties alone present a real political alternative to the bourgeois parties and fearing that their support of the Communist Parties—for instance by voting for Communist candidates—might weaken the position of the Social Democrats and strengthen that of the bourgeois parties.

Particularly favourable conditions for the growth of reformism (including bourgeois reformism) and opportunism among the workers developed in the fifties, when the economic boom and the resulting unprecedented growth of profits made it possible for monopoly capital to engage in large-scale social manoeuvring and for the working class to improve its economic position.

In addition, the fundamental changes in the world balance of forces in favour of socialism, on the one hand, and the higher level of organization of the working people and the sudden growth of

the strike movement in the capitalist world, on the other, compel monopoly capital to make certain socio-economic concessions to the workers in order to avoid violent social conflicts. A contributing factor is that the mass production of consumer goods (especially of durables such as cars, TV sets, refrigerators, etc.) requires a stable and expanding market. It can be created simply by raising the purchasing capacity of the working people when the population is becoming increasingly proletarianized. And if, as the consumer of manpower, monopoly capital is interested in reducing expenditure on the remuneration of labour, as the supplier of goods it is interested in a certain increase in wages. This objective contradiction too is exploited by the workers in the fight for their immediate demands.

The social mobility and certain pliability of the bourgeoisie is explained by one more factor. As concentration of production and scientific and technological progress proceed apace, those sections of the population which were formerly the basis, the social support of the bourgeois parties, are either disappearing or losing their political and economic importance. Hence the political need to win over a large part of the working people. The bourgeoisie expects to achieve this within the framework of bourgeois reformism, i.e. through certain socio-economic concessions to the working class and the semi-proletarian sections of society.

As a result, in the post-war years, the working class in the capitalist countries secured a more or less stable growth of real wages, an improvement in the social security system, a reduction of the working week, introduction or extension of paid annual holidays, etc.

In those countries where these gains were preceded by a stubborn class struggle, they have greatly contributed to the consolidation of militant trends within the working class and are being used by the working people as a bridgehead for a new offensive against capital. But where the raising of the standard of living was more in the nature of a preventive measure, one that was carried out "from the top" even though under pressure from the working people, it inevitably caused an enlivening and spread of reformist illusions.

Manoeuvring between the fundamental interests of the monopolies and the immediate demands of the working class, Social-Democratic Parties were responsible for, or contributed to, the carrying out of a number of reforms and measures which have helped raise the standard of living of the people.

For instance, during thirty-eight years in power the Swedish Social Democrats passed, among others, a bill on old-age pensions, to which all citizens are entitled upon reaching the age of 67. Those who have worked receive a seniority extra. The law provides for growth of the old-age pension in step with the rise in prices. All workers enjoy four-week paid holidays. Instruction in schools is free, and the schoolchildren receive free lunches and textbooks.

The Social Democrats of Denmark, who were in power (with intervals) from 1945 till 1968, adopted a law on raising disability pensions, children's allowances and allowances to unmarried mothers. In 1964, the Social Democrats put forward a plan under which, in the course of five years beginning with 1965, the size of the old-age pension to all citizens was to be brought to 60 per cent of their average income or wages. A law adopted in 1957 entitles all wage- and salary-earners to a three-week paid holiday. In 1962 working people earning not more than 7,000 Kr. annually were exempted from taxes. Between 1959 and 1964 expenditure on social needs grew by 90 per cent.

In 1944 the British Labour Party, who then participated in a coalition government, succeeded in passing a bill on compulsory free schooling for children. In 1946 a Labour government introduced a free medical service, disability and unemployment benefits, old-age pensions, and so on. In 1965 Harold Wilson's government raised pensions by an average of 20 per cent, restored rent control and adopted an expanded programme of housing construction.

In the FRG, among the socio-economic reforms adopted by the Bundestag with the active participation, or on the initiative, of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany (SDPG) special mention should be made of the 1951 law on the participation of workers and their organizations in the management of enterprises in the coal and metal-manufacturing industries. Despite all its imperfections, this law serves as the starting point in the trade unions' fight for worker participation in management at all levels. In 1955 the SDPG submitted to the Bundestag a bill on placing factory workers on the same footing with office employees as regards disability security. Under this bill, which was passed in 1957, the employer is to pay to a sick worker, in the course of six weeks, the difference between the social security benefit and his wages.

In 1960 the Bundestag adopted a law on labour protection for juveniles, which was drafted by the SDPG. In 1962 the Social Democrats placed before the Bundestag a draft law on improving mother and child care, which envisaged extending maternity leave to ten weeks before and ten weeks after confinement (the legislation now in force, also enacted on the initiative of the SDPG, provides for six weeks before and six weeks after childbirth), forbidding work during this period, with the payment of full wages, and so on. The bill was not passed in its entirety, but the debate on it in the Bundestag helped block the encroachments of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) on the existing legislation.

The activity of the Social Democrats in the socio-economic field is particularly effective in the lands where they are in power. For instance, Hessen and Bremen have the country's most progressive legislation in the field of secondary and higher education. In the lands and cities governed by the Social Democrats more attention is paid to the construction of kindergartens, youth recreation centres, sports facilities, etc.

Success in winning some of the pressing demands of the working class has certainly added much to the political standing of the Social-Democratic Parties among the workers.

The current evolution of capitalism is gradually changing the conditions of the activity of the different trends in the working-class movement. And although this process is not unimpeded, it should be noted that the new phenomena in capitalism are fraught with new dangers to reformism. To start with, the tactics of making partial reforms, of social manoeuvring, which the Social Democrats in particular used to practice, is now more and more frequently employed by bourgeois parties, especially the popularly supported ones which emerged after the Second World War and which were able to learn the lessons of the defeats sustained by the "traditional" bourgeois policy. Parading under the banner of neo-capitalism, bourgeois parties successfully compete with the Social Democrats in the field of state-monopoly "reform" of capitalist society. All this leads to the obliteration of the traditional distinctions between Social-Democratic and bourgeois policy and objectively leads the working people to question the validity of Social Democracy's claim to be the alternative to the bourgeois parties. The going over of some of the voters from the Social-Democratic Parties to the side of the bourgeois parties that can be seen in some countries is one of the consequences of this process.

The state-monopoly and "reformist" re-orientation of bourgeois policy extends the basis for the collaboration of Social-Democratic and bourgeois parties within the framework of a government coalition such as the "Centre Left" in Italy or the

former bi-partisan CDU-SDPG government in the FRG. This development is by no means new in the history of Social Democracy, whose leaders have on many occasions paid for a share of state power by abandoning the defence of even the everyday interests of the people they represent. But under state-monopoly capitalism the pursuit of such a policy involves a greater risk of loss of mass influence. The extent to which the capitalist state directly intervenes in economic processes and in labour-capital relations, determines the increase in the direct dependence of the condition of the people on the policy of the ruling parties, and this is obvious to everyone. It becomes increasingly difficult to explain away lower wages, unemployment, and the decline of some industries or economic regions by the action of spontaneous, uncontrollable forces. Such phenomena are "regulated" by the incomes policy, by the policy of state investments and other economic methods at the disposal of the governments. For this reason, the integration of the leading section of Social Democracy into the state-monopoly system increases the responsibility of the entire party in the eyes of the people for all the aspects of the activity of modern bourgeois society and, consequently, restricts its field of manoeuvre.

When in office Social-Democratic Parties are in a position to do something about curbing the monopolies and influencing socio-economic development in the interests of the working people, and it is difficult for them to get off with paltry reforms which have no effect on the existing social setup. The immediate interests and demands of the people have undergone substantial changes in recent years. Problems connected with employ-

ment and standard of living guarantees, the accessibility of education, professional advancement, and worker participation in management, have become increasingly important. And none of these problems can be solved through partial concessions which leave the foundations of the economic and political power of the monopoly bourgeoisie intact. In other words, there has been a lessening of popular support for traditional reformism.

This is not to say that reformism has exhausted all its possibilities; however, they are noticeably dwindling. One of the political trump cards of Social Democracy is hostility towards totalitarianism, defence of the parliamentary method of government and of bourgeois democratic freedoms. But even in this field, where the Social Democrats used to feel particularly confident, the development of state-monopoly capitalism has put them in a rather ambiguous position. The curtailment of the rights of parliaments and other elective bodies evokes an especially sharp protest from the supporters of Social Democracy. Therefore, the growth of anti-parliamentary trends in the policy of reactionary monopoly circles may compel the Social Democrats to revise established political practice. An example of this is the French Socialist Party, which first gave its full support to the one-man regime but ended up in opposition to it.

The objective changes in the socio-political situation confront the Social-Democratic movement with many difficult problems. The leaders of most Social-Democratic Parties are trying to solve these problems by reformist methods. This is still possible to some extent because the historical and socio-psychological factors we have already noted

tend to prevent the erosion of popular support for Social Democracy.

However, the drawing together of the immediate and fundamental interests of the working people, and the impossibility of satisfying many "partial" demands without radical social change, limit the effectiveness of these factors. It is becoming objectively possible for Social Democracy to take a new path of development as a mass political force—to go over from reformism to struggle, with the object of democratizing the socio-political system, ending the dominance of the monopolies in economic and social life, and using the apparatus of economic regulation in the interests of the working people. Social Democracy is facing a dilemma which is becoming increasingly clear—either to merge completely with the bourgeoisie, or to take a new and searching look at its policy.

The Communists have a definite interest in what choice the Social-Democratic Parties will make and they are trying to influence the supporters of Social Democracy to join in the struggle against the monopolies. The creative development of the general line of the communist movement, enriched with ideas on struggle for general democratic aims, on the possibility and necessity of an anti-monopoly coalition, conforms to the requirements and aspirations of the broadest masses of working people, including those who follow the Social Democrats. Such policy of the Communists towards the Social-Democratic Parties shatters anti-communist prejudices and undermines the position of the opponents of unity within the Social-Democratic movement. The experience of France, Italy and Finland demonstrates that the seemingly insurmountable barriers that only recently divided the

workers' parties can be removed or at least reduced given persistent, purposeful struggle for unity.

The instability of these barriers is testified to also by internal processes under way in Social-Democratic Parties. It would be misleading to put on record the extensive influence of Social Democracy and indicate its causes and omit to mention the deeply contradictory nature of this phenomenon. The support of the Social-Democratic Parties by certain sections of the working people has never been unconditional but has always been combined with spontaneous protest against opportunism and conciliation, against the neglect of the ultimate goals of the movement. Many zigzags and turns in the policy of the Social Democrats reflect this conflict of interests, views and sentiments within the mass of their supporters.

REFORMISM REFORMED

The Second World War and the post-war period witnessed a growth of state-monopoly capitalism and an aggravation of its contradictions. An unprecedented expansion of the sphere of the economic activity of the state has taken place and this activity is constantly assuming new forms. This spread of state-monopoly economic regulation enables the bourgeoisie to use to its advantage the possibilities afforded by

the scientific and technological revolution.

This development has given rise to keen debate within the working-class movement, the central question being whether modern capitalism has managed to extricate itself from the deadlock into which it was driven by its own contradictions. Right-opportunist ideologists usually answer this question in the affirmative, contending that capitalism has undergone a fundamental, qualitative change. They deny the relevance of Lenin's analysis of imperialism—which he defined as moribund, decaying capitalism—to the capitalism of our day.

However, Lenin did not regard capitalism's decay and dying out as a tendency to continuous, progressive and universal stagnation or disintegration of society and the economy: "It would be a mistake to believe that this tendency to decay precludes the rapid growth of capitalism."¹

Present-day development in the countries of state-monopoly capitalism gives grounds to state that the spontaneous mechanism of private enterprise which formerly made the functioning of the economic system possible has now become absolutely inadequate for this purpose, and that its uncontrolled activity not only runs counter to the interests of the working people but is already endangering the class interests of the monopoly bourgeoisie. The concentration of economic prerogatives in the hands of state institutions signifies a reluctant recognition by the bourgeoisie of the social character of the productive forces. The capitalists are being dragged, as Lenin put it, "against

¹ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 22, p. 300.

their will and consciousness, into some sort of a new social order, a transitional one from complete free competition to complete socialization."¹

The monopoly bourgeoisie has become aware, more or less in good time, of the need to adapt to the new demands which are being made on modern capitalist society by the scientific and technological revolution, the confrontation of the two world social systems, the mounting labour struggle in the capitalist countries themselves, and the break-up of the colonial system of imperialism. Being directed essentially against the fundamental interests of the working people, this adaptation is coming up against their growing resistance. Hence the inevitable sharpening of the class struggle. And the monopolies need a certain time to effect the reforms needed by them. They cannot allow—especially in view of the present correlation of world forces—the struggle of the workers to develop on a scale large enough to endanger their power. The working class has to be kept "quiet," a task with which the bourgeoisie cannot cope single-handed. That is why it turns to Right-wing Social Democracy for help. And this is exactly the latter's objective function at the present stage of development of state-monopoly capitalism.

Although capitalism sometimes manages, by means of state-monopoly regulation, to hold itself together, the very logic of development leads to the emergence of ever new discrepancies between the social character of production and the monopolist mechanism of appropriation. However ripe the situation may be for the downfall of ca-

pitalism, and however clear the outlines of the economic structure of the future society, this cannot automatically bring about the establishment of a new socio-economic system.

The objective changes in the conditions of the class struggle associated with the scientific and technological revolution coupled with the rapid development of state-monopoly capitalism, have confronted the international working-class movement with new problems.

Having analysed these changes, the communist movement has carried the revolutionary theory and tactics of the working class a stage further, enriching them with new conclusions and propositions. This has found the most concentrated expression in the programmatic documents of the international communist movement. The principal conclusion the Communists have drawn from this analysis is that the working class, while fighting for a democratic alternative to the dictatorship of the monopoly bourgeoisie, can and must win allies, unite them in a powerful anti-monopoly bloc and ultimately accomplish the socialist revolution by peaceful or non-peaceful means.

An entirely different conclusion has been drawn by Right-wing Social Democracy. In the opinion of its theorists, the scientific and technological revolution and state-monopoly regulation of the economy invalidate the laws of capitalism and ensure its growing into socialism. "We are living in the period of transformation of the old social order into a new one," say these theorists; and "the cardinal contradiction between socialism and capitalism is an abstraction," for "a society wherein economic activity continues to proceed primarily in

¹ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 22, p. 205.

the form of private capitalism can be gradually permeated with socialist ideas."¹

At first glance, this may appear to be a mere repetition of the old arguments and theses of pre-war Social Democracy. But that is a false impression.

In the works of Karl Renner, one of the pillars of Austro-Marxism, one can find propositions differing very little from those quoted above ("capitalist development by itself, we might say, automatically... leads to socialization... Deep within the old society... there ripen all the elements of the new society: capital is socialized," etc.). Yet it is stressed that "those Socialists who were to rely exclusively on the automatic course of capitalist development would commit a grave error. Capitalism will not fully destroy itself of its own. Nor will it turn directly into socialism by dint of the logic of its development alone."² This reservation on Renner's part is not fortuitous. It is not merely a tribute he pays to Marxism. In spite of his theorizing and in spite of his revision, albeit cautious, of Marxism, he admitted that "socialization by virtue of capitalism's automatic development alone is stamped with dreary half-heartedness, being fettered, as it were, with an invisible chain. Factory labour is actually socialized, but the worker body is far from being enthusiastic about this... This automation does not in the least affect the fact of surplus value, this fatal lot of mass exploitation."³

¹ E. Wigforss, *Socialism, värtid*, Stockholm, 1952, p. 112.

² K. Renner, *The Theory of Capitalist Economy, Marxism and the Problem of Socialization*, pp. 317-318.

³ Ibid., p. 317.

For this reason, when Right-wing theorists of the British Labour movement declare that Britain has ceased being a capitalist country, or when Right-wing Austrian Socialists assert that "in the democratic countries the workers' movement has already... ushered in the epoch of implementation of socialism,"¹ etc., this is not only an open denial of traditional Socialist slogans but also, in a large measure, revision of traditional Social-Democratic concepts, a kind of "reform of reformism."

Communists have long since noted the departure of modern Right-wing Social Democracy from traditional reformism. Luigi Longo observed in his work *Revisionism New and Old* (1957) that "at first reformism presented a trend that was socialist in its aspirations and aims," but "the reforms to which Social Democracy aspires today do not go beyond the bounds of the capitalist system... The reformism of our day is not reformist socialism any longer; it is reformist neo-capitalism, reformism of monopolies."

Modern Right-wing Social Democracy in many capitalist countries limits itself to those reforms which often serve the monopoly bourgeoisie as weapons in its struggle against the working class. Having undergone protracted evolution, the reformism of the Right-wing Social-Democratic leaders has thus landed in the same boat with the reformism of monopolies.

Basic policy documents of Social Democracy depict the socio-economic and political structure of modern capitalist society as having nothing, or almost nothing, in common with the capitalism

¹ *Arbeiter Zeitung*, May 15, 1958.

which in its time was dissected by Karl Marx. To take Right-wing theorists and policy-makers of Social Democracy at their word, the most flagrant contradictions of capitalism have already been removed and the working class, having become "integrated" in the given society, enjoys the same rights as the other strata.¹ Here is sample of the reasoning of the West German Social Democrat, Gisbert Rittig: "If concrete historical conditions show that any other system is found by man to be more humane than this one, and if its expediency from the viewpoint of this aim in concrete conditions is proved, nothing can prevent a Socialist from approving this system—neither the dogma, venerated traditions, nor the desire to preserve the socialist methods of the past."²

This ideological metamorphosis could not, of course, occur overnight. The evolution of "democratic socialism" into a more or less coherent doctrine took the end of the 1940's and the whole of the 1950's. Respect for traditions and the striving to preserve the socialist methods of the past scornfully brushed aside by Right-wing Social Democracy had struck sufficiently deep root in the consciousness of the rank-and-file supporters of Social Democracy. The overwhelming majority of the members and functionaries of the Social-Democratic Parties remain loyal to traditional reformism, which recognizes socialism as the ultimate goal and, in fact, stands in opposition to the "neo-capitalist" reformism of the modern Right-wing So-

¹ See *Socialist International Information*, 1962, Nos. 24-25, pp. 354-361.

² Quoted from *Right-wing Socialists vs. Socialism*, M., 1960, p. 20.

cial-Democratic leaders. It is no wonder that the latter are sounding the alarm over the failure of the supporters of Social Democracy to give their backing to the "reform of reformism."

Already the very attempt to strike out of the programmes of a number of West European Social-Democratic Parties some Marxist propositions, such as those related to class struggle, socialization of the means of production, and others (they were retained, for instance, in the 1926 Linz programme of the Socialist Party of Austria (SPA), the 1925 Heidelberg programme of the Social Democratic Party of Germany and some others) met with considerable resistance on the part of the Left forces in these parties.

The example of the Socialist Party of Austria is instructive in this respect. When Karl Czernetz, a noted Socialist, reflecting the official position of the party leadership, declared that "capitalism has undergone profound changes, and on the material and ideological ruins left after the war and fascism there has begun gradual realization of Socialism's demands in new forms that are in evidence today,"¹ a delegate from the Socialist youth organization said to his senior colleagues: "The workers' movement has always shown to the working people that the capitalists are to blame for the bad state of things. It has pinpointed the causes of the failure and difficulties of the individual. It has not only set the aim but has also shown who the enemy is. Such an analysis is lacking in our programme. Exploitation exists in our day as well."

That was not an isolated voice, and had to be

¹ K. Czernetz, *Vor der Entscheidung. Welt in Wandlung. Sozialismus im Werden*, Wien, 1957, p. 14.

headed by the SPA leadership. As distinct from the draft published in 1957, the programme adopted at the Vienna congress of the SPA in May 1958 contains a mention of class struggle and classes, and admits that "free development of the individual demands the establishment of such a system of socialized economy under which private capitalist and state capitalist power will be abolished and replaced with a democratic harmony of personal and socio-economic interests." Moreover, "in order to achieve these aims it is necessary to transform the economic system still dominated by profit obtained by exploitation into an economic system serving the well-being of all."¹

As we see, the Right-wing leadership of the SPA did not succeed in making the party accept the doctrine of "democratic socialism" in its "pure" form.

The Austrian programme is not an exception in this respect. The programme of the Social-Democratic Labour Party of Sweden adopted in June 1960 does not assert, either, that the question of socialism has already been decided in that country. Noting this fact, the Swedish Communists pointed out that "the Social Democrats do not claim to have built socialism (or even to have laid its foundations). Instead they use the term 'welfare state' which they have lifted lock, stock and barrel from bourgeois theories. This concept is used to signify society in which 'elements' of capitalism and socialism coexist. The 'welfare state' sounds better than capitalism, which has become discredited, and at the same time leaves plenty of room to manoeuvre. The social evils are ascribed

¹ *Arbeiter Zeitung*, May 15, 1958.

to the surviving 'elements' of capitalism, while changes that bring some, even partial, improvement in the conditions of one or another section of the population are hailed as being 'socialist.'"¹

More such examples could be cited. Elements of "old reformism" and "democratic socialism" co-exist in the programme of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany adopted at Bad Godesberg in November 1959, in the programme of the French Socialist Party approved by its 54th Congress in the summer of 1962, in the programme of the Belgian Socialist Party adopted in September 1959, as well as in the programmatic documents of the Labour Party of the Netherlands (autumn of 1959), the Social-Democratic Party of Denmark (June 1961), the Norwegian Labour Party (April 1961), and so on.

As we see it, this fact of "coexistence" is exceedingly important, for it shows, albeit indirectly, that even the "reformed" and largely denatured Marxism which was professed by Social-Democratic Parties in the pre-war period and assimilated, in a greater or smaller degree, by the popular masses that supported them, has proved capable of preventing the complete backsliding of Social Democracy as a whole to the position of frank "neo-capitalism."

For this reason, "democratic socialism" is, strictly speaking, a theoretically fictitious doctrine which "new thinkers" such as the Labourites Richard Crossland and the late John Strachey and their counterparts in France, West Germany, Austria and Japan have been trying to foist upon the supporters of Social Democracy, and which has

¹ *World Marxist Review*, No. 2, 1962, p. 43.

not been accepted *in toto* by the Social Democrats of any country.

Hence the numerous national versions of "democratic socialism" and the contradictions in the policy documents of the parties which formally accept it, because their leadership, while espousing its tenets, have had to reckon, even if minimally, with the traditions of the struggle, the peculiarities of socio-economic development, and the correlation of forces both in the country as a whole and in the working-class movement.

The programmatic "renovation" in the spirit of "democratic socialism" accomplished by the overwhelming majority of Social-Democratic Parties in the late fifties and early sixties doubtlessly gives grounds for saying that Social Democracy as a whole has made one more step further away from scientific analysis of contemporary society, from scientific criticism of capitalism and struggle against it. But in the course of this "renovation" it has become evident that ideologically modern Social Democracy is even less a single whole than before.

Among its supporters one can find: ideologists adhering to the positions of "socialism-in-action" rooted in Bernsteinianism; theorists who have snatched at "democratic socialism" in its extreme forms because it enables them to bypass the question of any elaboration of the economic foundations of the new, socialist society and virtually put an equal sign between socialism and capitalism as it is, agreeing only on the need to "imbue" it with abstract "moral ideals"; and, lastly, those "Socialists" who deny altogether, on the plea of the absence of "global determinism," that socialism is historically conditioned and inevitable.

Programmatic precepts of individual parties and documents of the Socialist International bear the imprint of these contradictions, being an indirect reflection of the struggle of trends within Social-Democratic Parties. This struggle was one of the reasons why it took so much time to hammer out "new" Social-Democratic doctrines. Kaj Björk, one of the authors of the programme of the Swedish Social Democrats, thus describes the process of its elaboration: "The new draft is not the product of any one individual, but largely the result of a collective effort. People with different backgrounds and opinions sat through many sessions, and old and new formulations were subjected to a thorough examination. The attempt to accommodate different interests and ideas and to find a common denominator often risked resulting in platitudes. Every participant can now be dissatisfied with this or that formulation, and no one finds the end product wholly to his liking."¹

Let us deal in greater detail with the new programmes of the West European Social-Democratic Parties.

Advancing the concept of a "special" social arrangement, of a "third road," the Right-reformist leaders are trying to evade the historical choice between capitalism and communism, to escape the implacable logic of reality. But it is one thing to declare that "We repudiate alike the soulless tyranny of Communism and the wasteful injustice of Capitalism,"² and quite another to make a coherent, serious analysis of the economic system

¹ *Socialist International Information*, 1960, No. 5, p. 75.

² *Socialist International Information*, 1962, Nos. 24-25, p. 361.

of modern capitalism, and to describe the features of the new social system based on "universal freedom," "justice for all," "genuine democracy," etc.

Let us turn to the facts. "The aim of the Social-Democratic economic policy," the programme of the SDPG says, "is constantly growing well-being and a share for everyone in the incomes of the national economy, life in conditions of freedom, without dehumanizing dependence and exploitation."¹ Similar terms are to be found in the formulation of the objective of the Austrian Socialists: "The aim of the SPA is an economy combining, under broad democratic control, personal freedom and planning, rational production and a just distribution of the social product, and ensuring, economically, the existence of all people."² The Dutch Social Democrats say: "The economic system should be directed towards efficiency in providing the needs of the individual and the community, towards utilizing to the full productive capacity and manpower, and towards a just distribution of income and wealth."³ Similar economic aims are outlined in the programmes of the other West European Socialist and Social-Democratic Parties.

In what do the Socialists see the main obstacle to the establishment of an economic system which will further the blossoming of the individual? The replies to this important question abound in nuances, and yet they are given in one and the same key.

"Curbing the power of the large-scale economy

¹ *Vorwärts*, November 20, 1959.

² *Arbeiter Zeitung*, May 15, 1958.

³ *Socialist International Information*, 1960, No. 9, p. 137.

is the central task of a free economic policy," is stated in the programme of the SDPG. "The state and society must not become captives of powerful groups united by common interests."¹ In other words, the blame is placed on the monopolies (although the Social Democrats try to avoid using this word), which hold back the development of society's productive forces. The Austrian Socialists consider, as noted above, that the realization of the economic aims proclaimed in their programme calls for transforming the present economic system, still dominated by profit obtained through exploitation, into a system which would serve universal well-being. The programme of the Dutch Social Democrats says that they are fighting "against the capitalist forces which, in spite of the changes that have taken place in our society, are still strong."²

Although rather abstract, these proclamations do not yet give grounds for speaking of vindicating the modern capitalist system and seem to pinpoint correctly the force that retards progress. However, next to these relatively objective statements of fact, one can find theses running counter to the declared aims.

The programme of the SDPG says: "Private ownership of the means of production is entitled to protection and support in so far as it does not interfere with the establishment of a just social system."³ The same idea is expressed in the Declaration of Principles of the Dutch Labour Party: "In order to promote efficiency and to bring about a more *widespread distribution* of economic power,

¹ *Vorwärts*, November 20, 1959.

² *Socialist International Information*, 1960, No. 9, p. 137.

³ *Vorwärts*, November 20, 1959.

it is desirable for different forms of publicly owned and privately owned enterprises to exist side by side. Within such a structure, however, public control must be exercised over privately owned undertakings in so far as this proves to be necessary in the interests of the community."¹ The programme of the Austrian Socialists notes that the creation of a better functioning economic system presupposes that "entrepreneurial initiative, competition and the pricing mechanism will be given ample scope for development within the framework of an economy serving exclusively the interests of society as a whole."²

As we see, the Social-Democratic programmes do not associate the question of the abolition of private capitalist ownership and its replacement by socialist ownership by the whole people with the establishment of "a just social system." This has become a keynote of works and utterances by Right-wing Social-Democratic theorists and politicians.

Socialism and the private ownership of the means of production are incompatible, because private ownership engenders the exploitation of labour by capital and social inequality. This is axiomatic. That is why the Communists accuse the Social-Democratic programmes and those who inspire them of vindicating capitalism and disorienting the working class.

We think it important to dwell on the origins of the arguments of the ideologists of Right-wing opportunism.

Social Democrats claimed more than half a century ago that the road recommended by them

¹ *Socialist International Information*, 1960, No. 9, p. 137

² *Arbeiter Zeitung*, May 15, 1958.

would make it possible to overcome both the revolutionary and opportunistic "extremes" of the socialist movement. Eventually the talk of opportunistic "extremes" died down, with Social Democracy directing the full fire of its criticism against the revolutionary methods of transforming capitalist reality. This is easily retraced through the writings of the apostles of Social Democracy.

Karl Kautsky wrote in 1918: "We all stand on one and the same soil of Marxism, differing primarily in interpretation and application of the same principles. It can be said that some adherents to the extreme viewpoints have not completely freed themselves from the bourgeois way of thinking and are tending to give greater credence to the bourgeois world, whose internal strength they overestimate. Others do not understand the bourgeois world in the least, seeing in it only a gang of swindlers. They disregard its spiritual and economic merits and think that the proletariat can take over, this instant, without any special knowledge and any special preparation, all the political and economic functions which have until now been performed by bourgeois institutions." Having disposed of the "extremes" of the socialist movement, Kautsky proceeded to assess the positive contribution of those few to whose lot "falls the contradictory task of simultaneously driving forward and applying the brake." Among them he listed those who "have studied and come to understand the bourgeois world," who "face it independently and critically but can also appreciate its merits and are aware of the difficulties involved in replacing it with a higher order".¹ He considered

¹ K. Kautsky, *Problems of the Proletarian Revolution*, pp. 21-22.

himself to be an adherent of this latter group, which he called a "Marxist centre."

Let us take a closer look at Kautsky's views regarding the replacement of capitalist society with a higher order, i. e. socialism. In his opinion, the chief mistake of the revolutionary wing of the German working-class movement, the Spartacus Bund—and one which he, incidentally, exaggerated to immense proportions—was its incorrect view of the deepening of the revolution, according to which, he alleged, "by means of constant strikes and the simultaneous presentation of unrealizable demands in all spheres of production the workers will make all production impossible. The growth of misery must, in the Spartacists' opinion, bring the temperature to boiling point. How the social mode of production will be cooked in this boiling magic pot still remains a mystery..."¹ Having thus misrepresented the position of the Spartacists, Kautsky pronounced the verdict: "In a socialist Germany the workers will eat, dress and live worse than in the capitalist countries," and this was already a threat to the cause of international socialism, "whose appeal will not increase if a socialist regime in Germany brings the workers only misery and want."²

What did Kautsky propose instead?

"By means of fundamental social reforms, state intervention in production, housing and transport, the standard of living of the broad masses, producers and consumers alike, must be raised to the level attainable under the present relations of

¹ K. Kautsky, *Problems of the Proletarian Revolution*, p. 17.

² *Ibid.*, p. 18.

production. But simultaneously every effort must be made to transform as speedily as possible the existing capitalist system of production into a socialist one and thus remove the last surviving form of exploitation of man by man."¹

Kautsky took great pains to evade the question: In what way, after all, will the working class come by power to implement this programme? Hence his vague discourses on distinctions between a social and a political revolution ("If a political revolution cannot do without destruction and disturbances, a social revolution puts emphasis on a regular process of production"²) and his oft-repeated warning that the essence of a socio-economic system cannot be changed by the mere act of seizure of power.

Similar views were held by R. Hilferding, who wrote that "even if the transition of political power from one class to another really can be consummated in a comparatively short act... economic development always takes the form of protracted organic evolution."³

Such views already contain the basis for the formulation of the concepts of "organized capitalism," "universal socialization," "economic democracy," and so on, which became standard equipment of the Social Democracy of the inter-war period.

On the whole, in that period the Social Democrats endeavoured to base their policy on the peculiarities of the socio-economic processes that

¹ K. Kautsky, *Problems of the Proletarian Revolution*, p. 16.

² *Ibid.*, p. 30.

³ R. Hilferding, *Capitalism, Socialism and Social Democracy*, pp. 32, 36.

were taking place within the capitalist system. However, because of the fallaciousness of the basic premises, the picture of the development of capitalism as drawn by their theorists inevitably assumed a mysticized form. For instance, from the real fact of concentration of production and capital they drew the conclusion that the principal economic task was to establish state control over the existing cartels and trusts, and, where these are not in existence, to create them with the help of the state. "For the time being," Renner suggested, "let us allow them to go on appropriating and accumulating surplus value by their methods, so as subsequently to turn them over, at one fell swoop, to the state, which will use them productively."¹ Thus, first comes state control, which will in time increasingly assume a "socially-public character." Hence the conclusion that "the chief antagonism... is the contradiction between the uncontrolled private economy (capitalism) and the conscious public economy (socialism)."² Renner advanced, as a major political task—although formulated in an abstract way—"conquest of political power," without which "real socialization is unthinkable."³

Conspicuous in all these disquisitions is a large number of incongruities. For instance, on the one hand, state property is already regarded as an element of the public economy termed socialism; on the other, the conquest of political power (in a parliamentary way, to be sure) is alleged to show

¹ K. Renner, *The Theory of Capitalist Economy, Marxism and the Problem of Socialization*, p. 321.

² Ibid., p. 325.

³ Ibid.

the possibility of using the bourgeois state as an effective instrument for building a new economic system which will not only lead to the abolition of the exploitation of man by man but will "keep the economy running." By equating a parliamentary majority with the possession of real levers of power in capitalist society, the Social Democrats artificially linked their economic and political concepts and imparted a certain coherence to their theory which, however, broke down at its first contact with reality.

Frederick Engels emphasized in his *Anti-Dühring*: "... The transformation, either into joint-stock companies (and trusts), or into state ownership, does not do away with the capitalistic nature of the productive forces. In the joint-stock companies (and trusts) this is obvious. And the modern state, again, is only the organization that bourgeois society takes on in order to support the general external conditions of the capitalist mode of production against the encroachments as well of the workers as of individual capitalists. The modern state, no matter what its form, is essentially a capitalist machine, the state of the capitalists, the ideal personification of the total national capital. The more it proceeds to the taking over of the productive forces, the more does it actually become the national capitalist, the more citizens does it exploit. The workers remain wage-workers—proletarians. The capitalist relation is not done away with. It is rather brought to a head."¹

Thus, Engels made it absolutely plain that increase in the share of state ownership does not at all change the essence of capitalism as a mode of

¹ F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 382.

production, inasmuch as the state and state ownership under capitalism is merely a concentrated expression of the economic requirements of the bourgeoisie as the dominant class in production. But he noted at the same time that, "brought to a head," the capitalist relation "topples over. State ownership of the productive forces is not the solution of the conflict, but concealed within it are the technical conditions that form the elements of that solution."¹

The latter thesis will be better understood after reading what Engels had to say on this score in his famous letter to Conrad Schmidt dated October 27, 1890. He wrote that a society divided into classes gives rise to certain functions which it cannot dispense with, and that the persons appointed for this purpose form a new branch of the division of labour within society, making themselves independent of the latter and acquiring particular interests, distinct, too, from the interests of those who empowered them. The state as "the new independent power, while having in the main to follow the movement of production, reacts in its turn, by virtue of its inherent relative independence—that is, the relative independence once transferred to it and gradually further developed—upon the conditions and course of production. It is the interaction of two unequal forces: on the one hand, the economic movement, on the other, the new political power, which strives for as much independence as possible, and which, having once been established, is endowed with a movement of its own."²

¹ F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 382.

² K. Marx and F. Engels, *Sel. Works*, Vol. 3, p. 491.

As we see, Engels puts on record here the existence of the mechanism of the so-called retroactive influence of the state on the economic development of society. In his idea, this reaction of state power upon economic development "can run in the same direction, and then development is more rapid; it can oppose the line of development, in which case nowadays it will go to pieces in the long run in every great people; or it can prevent the economic development from proceeding along certain lines, and prescribe other lines."¹

In the growth of the relative independence of the state and of the volume of state property, Engels saw first of all a conspicuous symptom of the aggravation of the contradictions between the social character of labour and the private capitalist appropriation of its product, an attempt to camouflage and as far as possible mitigate this central antagonism of the capitalist system. "Whilst the capitalist mode of production more and more completely transforms the great majority of the population into proletarians, it creates the power which, under penalty of its own destruction, is forced to accomplish this revolution," Engels pointed out, and proceeded to draw a conclusion of fundamental importance: "Whilst it forces on more and more the transformation of the vast means of production, already socialized, into state property, it shows itself the way to accomplishing this revolution. *The proletariat seizes political power and turns the means of production in the first instance into state property.*"²

As we have seen above, Social-Democratic ideo-

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, *Sel. Works*, Vol. 3, pp. 491-492.

² F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 384.

logists approach this question in an entirely different way. In point of fact, they equate state property with the social economy of the socialist type. It will not be out of place to note here that the identification of state capitalism with socialism (which actually occurred, for instance, in K. Renner's discourses) was to some extent a new phenomenon in the Social-Democratic thought of the twenties and thirties, for the viewpoint prevalent in the previous period was that "in every concrete instance it is necessary to find out whether the conversion of private into state property has a state-socialist or state-capitalist character."¹

Thus gradual socialization became the universal means advocated by Social Democrats at that time. They held that this made it possible to neutralize the small and medium proprietors in industry and agriculture, to secure the support of office employees and civil servants, whose interests would be only minimally affected by the reorganization of the economy, and so on.

The above-mentioned assessments of the role of the state sector and the state as a whole in "socializing" society comprise a source of modern Right-wing Social Democracy's programmatic views of the state and therefore merit somewhat more detailed treatment.

With the development of capitalism there began the formation of two social structures—economic and political—which are largely interdependent and mutually complementary. In view of this we think it appropriate to raise the question of ascertaining the specific features of the dominant class

¹ P. Kampffmeyer, *Changes in the Theory and Practice of Social Democracy*, 1906, p. 49.

and the ruling class (in the latter instance some researchers use the term "the ruling elite," which is fairly apt). The chief distinction between them is that the dominant class is a product of the economic structure of society, of its division into principal classes, whereas the ruling elite is, in addition, a product of the political system of society. Obviously, in the capitalist society of both the 1920's and 1930's and of today, not by any means all capitalists belong to the economically and politically ruling elite.

Social-Democratic theorists succeeded in detecting this phenomenon but proved unable to make a scientific analysis of it. They overlooked its most important aspect connected with the modification of forms of class rule. In an antagonistic society there are three principal features of class dominance: (a) control over the means of production, over the process of labour and its product; (b) the guaranteeing of this control by state law; (c) substantiation of this control by the prevalent ideological system. The power elite, in turn, can be characterized as the institution for working out current political programmes and political decisions whose function is not limited to passive theoretical elaboration but extends to the translation of these programmes into the language of practical precepts and their realization at the top level.

This "division of labour" can create the impression that in adopting decisions the ruling class (more precisely, stratum) can, or does, enjoy almost full independence. This view would have some foundation if decision-making were free from the influence of an element which is "taboo" to the power elite—the economic dominance of the capitalist class as a whole. In other words, in drawing

up a programme, the power elite tries to find an optimal solution which takes account of the interests of the entire capitalist class, safeguarding its dominance, and at the same time camouflages the more apparent ills of the capitalist system, satisfying to some extent certain demands of the working people. Thus, the principal function of the capitalist state has been, and remains, to accommodate the capitalist system to concrete reality connected with changes in the correlation of forces on a national, as well as an international, scale, in order to preserve the economic domination of the big bourgeoisie and prevent erosion of the capitalist system. By virtue of this function, the power elite (and in the final analysis, the state) often proves to be a force much more "dynamic" and "innovatory" than the dominant class, which in its mass tends to be static and conservative.

It does not follow from the bourgeois character of the capitalist state that the invariable objective of its policy is the direct increase of the incomes of the capitalists and the decrease of those of the working people. Defence of the interests of the capitalists as a class does not preclude the pursuit of a policy which may to a certain extent run counter to the immediate personal interests of individual capitalists or even monopoly groups. Changes at home and in the international arena compel the capitalist state to impart to its activity some elements of "neutrality," but only in the sense that "support" for or "sympathy" with some or other aspirations of the people is given or manifested only on condition that the fundamental interests of private capital remain untouched, and thus becomes part of the unavoidable cost of the functioning of the capitalist state as a whole.

In view of this there is no reason for regarding the bourgeois state as omnipotent—which is exactly what Right-wing Social Democracy does, declaring through its theorists: "The power of the state has enormously increased, and it is now an independent intermediate power, dominating the economic life of the country," by virtue of which "the capitalist era has now passed into history."¹

Right-wing Social Democrats regard the bourgeois state as the basis upon which the new society is to be built. The Bad Godesberg programme of the SDPG says, in part: "The state is to create prerequisites for every individual to be able to develop freely, being aware of his responsibility and his social duty. . . . As the social state, it is to ensure the existence of its citizens, so as to give everyone an opportunity of self-determination on the basis of his own responsibility, and to further the development of free society.

"Owing to the fusion of the democratic idea with the social and legal idea, the state is to become a cultured state whose essence is determined by the social forces and which serves the creative spirit of the people."²

As already pointed out, the abolition of private ownership of the means of production is no longer regarded in the programmes of Social-Democratic Parties as essential to the achievement of these aims. For example, the Socialist Party of Austria considers that the economic dependence of the working people on the capitalists can be eliminated "through economic planning and democratic control over the use of the means of production and over the distribution of the national

¹ *New Fabian Essays*, London, 1953, p. 39.

² *Uorwärts*, November 20, 1959.

income," although further on the same SPA programme avers that the Socialists "intend to include large enterprises occupying key positions in the economy in the socialized system, and to subordinate managerial power in the economy and administration to democracy." A few lines further on, however, the value of this promise is nullified by the statement that in the pursuit of these tasks the socialized economy will cooperate with the private economy.¹

With the development of state-monopoly capitalism, the ideas of socialization have been gradually pushed into the background by abstract discourses on the need for the correct distribution of economic functions between the socialized economy (as represented above all by the state) and private capital, with the result that the question of the mode of production has been supplanted by the assertion of the principle of pluralism of economic forms, which is regarded as an effective stimulant of economic growth.

This about-face needed at least a semblance of scientific substantiation and the ideologists of Social Democracy have done their best to provide it. Typical of their numerous theoretical and pseudo-theoretical arguments is this: "Wholesale socialization" is bound to cause economic chaos and worsen the condition of the people, who can turn away from the Social-Democratic Parties, deny them electoral support, and give their votes to the bourgeois parties.

From the purely formal point of view, there is some sense in this argument. Indeed, any radical break-up of a functioning economic mechanism

cannot but disturb for some time the proportions in the production and exchange spheres that have been established over the centuries. And it is quite possible to imagine a situation wherein some working people, including some industrial workers, whose class consciousness is not highly developed, will be discontented with the worsening (even if temporary) of their situation and turn away from the workers' party and find themselves, figuratively speaking, on the other side of the barricades.

But such a contingency was foreseen also by the Social-Democratic theorists of the twenties and thirties, who considered, however, that socialization was not an instant act but a gradual process involving several stages, thus making it possible to change the production structure of capitalist society without serious economic cataclysms. "Socialization is precisely organizational work," the same K. Renner wrote. "Like any work, it is measured in time. It is not carried through by a single decree of dictatorial power, nor conjured up by the magic words: 'Let there be,' and there is! The history of the social movement knows this faith in miracles, but socialism as a science and as action does not know miracles nor does it need them."¹

Thus, it is a waste of time to criticize the abandonment in principle of the slogan of socialization (formally it is retained in the programmes of some Social-Democratic Parties) even from the standpoint of "classical" Social-Democratic theory.

The new trends in the development of state-monopoly capitalism and above all the greater

¹ *Arbeiter Zeitung*, May 15, 1958.

¹ K. Renner, *The Theory of Capitalist Economy. Marxism and the Problem of Socialization*, p. 322.

economic role of the state, and the objective interest of certain bourgeois circles in some socio-economic reforms, including a certain measure of nationalization, are invoked by Right-wing Social Democracy to justify its theoretical concepts and policy line which reject the intervention of the working class in economic, social and political life with a view to fundamentally transforming society.

In the opinion of Right-wing Social Democracy, socio-economic development in the countries of developed capitalism has changed the content of three basic concepts of "doctrinaire socialism" (i.e. scientific socialism): the state, the class and the revolution. Pietro Nenni holds, for instance, that the state "is no longer personified in the dictatorship and monopoly of any single class, even the economically strongest one, but is an expression of social balances or imbalances arising in society, of the correlation between the class forces and policies and of the relationship between the state sector and the private economy." The concept of the class "has extended to all the forces of labour: the workers, the peasants, the technicians and the intelligentsia." And finally, "the concept of revolution does not arise from violence, civil war or class or party dictatorship any longer but has expanded into the concept of democratic evolution of society directed towards ever higher forms of social life ensuring equality."¹

¹ P. Nenni, *Strategie des Sozialismus*, Zukunft, 1966, Nos. 8-9, p. 21. At the 37th Congress of the Italian Socialist Party Nenni's Deputy De Martino declared that the state "is no longer necessarily a class organ called upon to constantly oppress the working people" (*Avanti*, October 28, 1966).

Herbert Wehner, a Right-wing leader of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany, is more specific. Asked what political principles pertaining to society and the state his party had disowned by adopting its new programme in 1959, he replied: "To mention the most important ones, they are that... democracy, the democratic state... is only a prelude to socialism; ...that the Social-Democratic Party and its policy are an expression of historical development and, so to speak, of class struggle; that socialization (of the means of production.—*Auth.*) is an instrument and an aim of the Social-Democratic economic policy."¹

Thus, from the contradictory trends of development of state-monopoly capitalism the Right-wing Social Democrats have drawn the conclusion that in the present epoch capitalism itself is evolving in the direction of socialism and the working class only has to remove some impediments to this "spontaneous" process. As they see it, the development of the productive forces under capitalism, the scientific and technological revolution, ensure by themselves such an abundance of the good things of life that this renders ineffective the laws of capitalist production and distribution. The progressing separation of capital-property from capital-function in the capitalist countries allegedly eliminates the bedrock of capitalism—private ownership of the means of production. State-monopoly regulation of the economy, conducted, as is known, in the interests of the entire capitalist class, is proclaimed by them to be proof of the

¹ G. Gaus, *Staatserhaltende Opposition oder hat die SPD kapituliert? Gespräche mit Herbert Wehner*, Reinbek bei Hamburg, 1966, p. 38.

thesis on the "supra-class" nature of the modern bourgeois state.

Rejecting class struggle, Right-wing Social-Democratic leaders declare that the foundations of the future socialist society are already contained in "neo-capitalism" and that the task of Social Democracy is merely to perfect it step by step to carry out the synthesis of private and state initiative in the economic sphere and of bourgeois democracy and ethical categories in the sphere of social relations. As depicted by the ideologists of modern Social Democracy, socialism is not a qualitatively new social formation which can be reached through stubborn class struggle and the conquest of power by the working class and its allies. In their view, the task is merely to remove some undesirable aspects that "neo-capitalist" society still has, and to permeate this society with "humanistic" ideals.

All these ideas are concentrated, as noted above, in the doctrine of "democratic socialism." In the economic field this doctrine advocates refusal to socialize private property; in the political field it categorically denies the need for class struggle and the principle of proletarian dictatorship. As the ultimate goal it advances "ethical socialism" which reduces the struggle for socialism to "loyal" parliamentary struggle motivated by the abstract ideals of "justice," "morality" and "freedom."

A typical feature of the Right-wing Social Democracy of the 1960's is a trend away from theory, and an emphasis on "pragmatism." Hence its policy line which reduces all the aims of the working-class movement to piecemeal reforms designed to contribute, within the framework of capitalism, towards full employment, better social insurance,

a higher standard of living, a fairer distribution of incomes, an extension of civil rights, and equal educational and cultural opportunities, and so on, while the general perspective of mankind's future is lost, its socialist prospects forsaken.

Consistently, with its view of the "supra-class" state as the principal instrument of this policy, Right-wing Social Democracy lays special emphasis on "division of state responsibility" at any price. This is indicative of its deepening links with imperialism in conditions of modern state-monopoly capitalism. The collaboration of Right-wing Social Democracy with the monopoly bourgeoisie has gone so far as to cause a split in what was once "monolithic" reformism.

Right-wing Social Democracy has irrevocably refused to champion a comprehensive programme of reforms capable of curbing monopoly power, whereas the rank-and-file supporters of Social Democracy have remained, in varying degrees, loyal to the demands of old, "traditional" reformism, which did put forward such a programme. The pressure to which they are subjected in connection with the monopolist reforming of society—not infrequently conducted by Right-wing Social Democracy itself—cannot but evoke their resistance. True, these supporters of Social Democracy are still far from being aware of the irreconcilable contradiction between their demands and the policy of the Right-wing Social Democratic leaders. But they are on the way to this realization—thanks, among other things, to the struggle around the traditional demand for economic democracy. In a number of developed capitalist countries it is one of the principal demands advanced by the supporters of Social Democracy, particularly in

the trade unions. As for Right-wing Social Democracy, it has virtually given up this demand as well.

Thus, while Right-wing Social Democracy is flirting with the monopolies, the rank-and-file Social Democrats support objectively anti-monopoly demands. The struggle between these trends influences the development of both individual parties and the international Social-Democratic movement.

CHAPTER III

INTENSIFIED DIFFERENTIATION IN THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT

Social-Democratic Parties differ considerably in their ideological concepts and policies. These differences reflect the peculiarities of the historical development of countries and depend on the internal and international political situation, the place the given party occupies in the political system of its country, and the degree to which it and the working class as a whole are influenced by other working-class parties.

and, above all, by the Communist Parties.

In spite of the diversity of the declared aims and political practice of parties it is possible to single out, in most general form, several types of parties of modern Social Democracy. First come what can be called parties of the "neo-capitalist" orientation. The vindication of modern capitalism is central to the theoretical views and policies of their leaders—they characterize bourgeois society as "welfare society" and the monopoly-controlled state as a "supra-class" state. These leaders not only reject class struggle, but deny the very existence of classes in modern capitalist society; they contend that the foundations of the future socialist system are already contained, in principle, in the economically developed capitalist countries, and that the task of Social Democracy is merely to perfect them gradually. They directly or indirectly approve acts of imperialist aggression and neo-colonialist expansion. They are thoroughly anti-communist, and this is fundamental to their world outlook. The very idea of possible joint action with Communists is repugnant to the majority of the leaders of the parties of "neo-capitalist" orientation.

When in power they do not effect profound social reforms, limiting themselves to half-measures. When in opposition they make only timid use of the possibilities for challenging the bourgeois parties. Seeking to keep the Social-Democratic movement within the framework of purely parliamentary struggle, they pursue a policy aimed at curtail- ing the mass movement in their countries.

Discounting secondary details and nuances, the Right flank of international Social Democracy can be said to be made up of many of the leaders of

the Japanese party of "democratic socialism," the Italian Unitarian Socialist Party, the Australian Democratic Labour Party, the Social-Democratic Party of Germany and the Socialist Party of Austria.

This does not mean, of course, that the policy of these parties is entirely devoid of elements that are positive from the standpoint of the interests of the working people. But these elements do not change the essence of the "neo-capitalist" line of their Right-wing leaders.

A shift to the right is to be observed in some other Social-Democratic Parties of developed capitalist countries. Scandinavian Social Democracy provides an example of this. After having achieved some of their declared aims, somewhat improving the condition of the working people, the Social-Democratic Parties of Sweden, Norway and Denmark found themselves in a situation in which the slogans they proclaimed could be realized only through resolutely restricting the power of big capital—something which their leaders did not dare attempt.

To the Left flank of international Social Democracy belong, despite certain contradictions in policy, the Socialist Party of Japan, the Social-Democratic Party of Finland and, latterly, the new Socialist Party of France and the Italian Socialist Party. Characteristic of these parties, to a greater or lesser degree, is a rejection of anti-communism as the pivot of policy. They adopt a realistic progressive stand on a number of major national and international political issues and cooperate with Communists in different ways.

Along with the development of different trends in the international Social-Democratic movement,

recent years have seen considerable intensification of the struggle between different trends within many Social-Democratic Parties. The magnitude and acuteness of this struggle in every country depend on the correlation of political forces, the level of class consciousness of the different sections of the working class and the working people as a whole, the experience and traditions of the working-class movement, and so on. The degree of the differentiation within Social-Democratic Parties is influenced by economic factors, by the policy of the bourgeoisie towards the working class, and also by the strategic and tactical line of the Communist Parties.

At present it is hard to find a Social-Democratic Party whose rank-and-file members and some of the activists do not evince, in some way or other, a striving for a greater ideological and political independence of their party.

The revival of the militancy of rank-and-file Socialists and party activists is a reaction to the dangerous approximation of the position of the Right-wing party leaders to those of the bourgeois parties, dooming Social Democracy to political bankruptcy. The increased activity of the Socialist Left wing manifests itself first and foremost in more frequent protests against the line of the party leadership voiced at congresses, conferences, meetings of district and primary organizations, and in the press.

The Socialist Left wing is not ideologically and politically homogeneous. It unites people who are close to Marxism, supporters of Socialist-Communist unity of action, resolute opponents of capitalism, as well as vacillating, inconsistent elements, sectarian groups, and Left-wing reformists

who sometimes have strong anti-communist prejudices. The relative strength of these groups differs from party to party, but the very fact of their existence is indicative of deep ferment within Social Democracy, of the growing disappointment of the membership with the policy of the Right-wing leaders.

There is hardly a Social-Democratic Party today in which voices are not heard criticizing some points or other of the party programme or its practical moves in the field of internal or foreign policy. It should be borne in mind, however, that this criticism often does not extend to overall ideological and political precepts imposed upon the party by its leadership but is aimed only at some, although often important, aspects of practical policy. As a rule, the volume of such criticism increases when great numbers of working people stir to action. But as soon as this pressure from below slackens so does the activity of opposition-minded Socialists.

Let us take, as a case in point, the struggle between two trends in the British Labour movement.

The period from 1965 to 1970 saw heightened activity of the Left in the Labour Party and the trade unions, called forth by the growing disillusionment of the working people with the Wilson government. That government did nothing to honour its promises regarding recognition of the two German states and their borders established as a result of the Second World War and the creation of a nuclear-free zone in Central Europe. The whole world was witness to the position of direct and indirect support of the South Rhodesian racist regime adopted by the Labour leadership. In point of fact, the Labour government sided on

many issues with the aggressive imperialist circles, outspoken opponents of relaxation of international tension.

It was precisely the unpopularity of Wilson's foreign policy that gave the first powerful impetus to the growth of opposition sentiments and movements in the Labour Party and the trade unions. Particularly great indignation of the British working class was roused by the government's support of US aggression in Vietnam.

This aggression and the policy of the Wilson government were resolutely condemned by many trade unions, including such large ones as the Transport and General Workers' Union, the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers and the National Union of Railwaymen, which have 1,500,000, 350,000 and 300,000 members respectively.

Heated debates on the Vietnam question got under way during the discussion of the foreign policy statement prepared by the Labour Party Executive for the annual conference in September 1965. The first target of sharp criticism by many delegates was the Labour leadership's failure to dissociate itself from the US aggression and its failure to condemn it. The delegates who challenged the leadership on this issue stated their own position clearly. They demanded an immediate end to the bombing raids on the DRV and a break with US policy. This resolution was supported by more than one-third of the delegates—2,284.

Added to the discontent with the foreign policy of the government was an equally sharp denunciation of its internal policy. Voting Labour in March 1966, the working people had expected that, with a secure majority in parliament, the Wilson go-

vernment would initiate a socio-economic policy more favourable to the interests of the people.

But these hopes were not justified. Having consolidated its position in the House of Commons, the government launched a direct onslaught on the living standards of the working people. In August 1966, it rushed through a prices and incomes law providing for a long-term wage-freeze and empowering the Prices and Incomes Board to prosecute workers who took recourse to strike action or even spoke out for strikes for higher wages. It was a matter of not only freezing wages but of restricting the trade union right to strike. The objective of the law, thus, was to keep wages, through state regulation ("incomes policy") at a level much lower than that which could be secured by the trade unions through collective bargaining. The prices and incomes law prevented wage rises for about 3.5 million workers in the building, cotton, engineering, railway and some other economic branches which had been stipulated in collective agreements.

This law met with mass opposition from the British working-class movement. At the Trades Union Congress (TUC) of 1966 (September 5-9) despite tremendous pressure on the part of the government and Right-wing trade union leaders, 3,814,000 votes were cast against the resolution endorsing the government's economic policies, including the "incomes policy," against 4,936,000 votes for it, while the resolution condemning the prices and incomes law received 3,908,000 votes (there were 5,037,000 votes against it). And voting on the section of the TUC General Council's report supporting the wage-freeze policy came near defeating the Right wing, being carried by a major-

rity of only 344,000 votes (4,577,000 to 4,233,000).

The voting at the congress was doubtless the most impressive but by far not the only demonstration of the growing trade union opposition to the socio-economic policy of the Wilson government. More and more voices were heard in the trade union movement calling for profound social reforms, and a change in the general trend of the government's policy. An increasing number of trade unions demanded nationalization of a number of industries, much heavier taxes on the bourgeoisie, a ban on the export of capital, and a sharp cutback in military expenditures. More and more often the demand was pressed for workers' control in the factories.

While the Trades Union Congress demonstrated the mounting mass discontent with the domestic policies of the Wilson government, the annual conference of the Labour Party in October 1966 revealed the growing opposition within the working-class movement to the foreign policy line of the Right-wing Labour leaders. Although the leadership succeeded in securing the conference's approval of the basic aspects of the government's internal and foreign policy, on a number of issues of great political significance, the conference directly disavowed it, adopting, in the face of the objections of the ministers and the Executive Committee, three important resolutions.

The first of them, tabled by the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU), expressed grave concern at the fast growth of unemployment in the country and urged the government to take prompt measures against dismissals. It was carried, with 3,289,000 votes for and 3,137,000 against.

The second resolution, also submitted by the TGWU, insisted on a substantial reduction in military expenditure in the interest of a healthier national economy, social progress, and prosperity. This resolution was carried with 3,470,000 votes for, and 2,932,000 against.

The third resolution, sponsored by the Fire Brigades Union, and adopted (3,851,000 votes to 2,644,000), called on the government to bring maximum pressure to bear on the United States with a view to ending the war in Vietnam.

Large numbers of votes were cast for other Left resolutions on foreign policy questions.

Reflecting the ever greater displeasure of the masses, the Left in the Labour movement published, in 1968, a Socialist Charter in which they pointed out, among other things: "No better example could be set before us than the Chartists of the last century. They asserted the right of working people to control their own lives. . . . The Chartists' demands were not wrong—but they were inadequate. The central principle of a Socialist Charter of our time must be that those who take decisions affecting the welfare and happiness of the people must be made accountable to the people." One of the principal demands of the Charter is "full public accountability of private and public institutions and growing democratic control by workers and employees over the decisions which determine their working lives."¹

Further blows at the position of the Right-wing leadership were dealt by the Labour Left at the 1967 and 1968 conferences. For instance, the 1967 conference adopted, on the initiative of the Left,

¹ *Tribune*, June 7, 1968.

a resolution demanding dissociation from the aggression of the United States in Vietnam, while the conference of 1968 condemned, by an overwhelming majority of votes (5,098,000 to 1,124,000), the economic policy of the government.

The highlight of the 1968 conference was that for the first time in the history of Labour conferences chief opposition to the Right-wing leadership came from the trade unions. Previously the party leadership had used the trade unions and the card vote to keep in check the Left forces from local party organizations. In other words, the trade unions had served the Labour leadership as an instrument for suppressing opposition at conferences. At the 1968 conference, however, the party leaders were confronted for the first time with a bloc of the largest trade unions which acted in concert not only against the government's economic policy but also on a number of other issues.

Early in August 1969 the weekly *Tribune* published the text of a draft resolution on foreign policy for the forthcoming annual conference of the Labour Party, and a statement on European security, entitled "Peace in Europe." Both documents were written by Left Labour MPs, among them such prominent figures as Tom Driberg, Michael Foot, William Griffith, Hugh Jenkins, Jan Mikardo and Trevor Park. They supported the idea of convening a conference on European security and called for a discussion of this question in the Labour Party.

The resolution read, in part: "The meeting of the Communist countries in Budapest produced a public proposal, or reiteration of the proposal, for an East-West governmental conference to prepare

a European security pact, which would replace the two military pacts. This was turned down by the NATO Council meeting in Washington in April 1969, on the grounds that the Warsaw Pact countries were not genuine in their proposals.

"This line should be strongly contested. How do the Western governments know that their opposite numbers do not mean what they say if they are not prepared to test them out by entering into negotiations?"¹ The resolution demanded recognition of the Oder-Neisse frontier and the other frontiers now existing in Europe. It also demanded recognition of the German Democratic Republic, on the one hand, and preservation of the independence of West Berlin, on the other.

"It would be tragic," the resolution said in conclusion, "if a British Labour government failed to give a lead at the moment when the greatest military power in the world may be ready to take real steps towards peaceful coexistence."²

The growing pressure on the part of the Labour Left wing and many trade unions pursued one aim—a radical change in the internal and foreign policy of the Wilson government. This was corroborated by the 1969 Labour conference. Held at Brighton from September 29 to October 3, it was destined to become the last conference the Labourites held as the ruling party.

The party leadership did its utmost at the conference to limit the effectiveness and scope of the criticism levelled at the government, and to create a semblance of unity in the party on the eve of the general election. The Executive set out to

¹ *Tribune*, August 8, 1969.

² *Ibid.*

achieve its aims with the help of procedural manipulations designed to deprive opposition-minded delegates of the right to vote, to remove from the agenda questions causing disagreement in the party, and to prevent a card vote whose outcome could be decided by the largest trade unions opposed to the Right-wing leadership. Ministers and members of the party's Executive even took recourse to direct pressure on delegates. For instance, Harold Wilson had conferences, lasting late into the night, with representatives of the two biggest trade unions, the Transport and General Workers' Union and the Amalgamated Union of Engineering and Foundry Workers, who had denied public support to the prices and incomes policy resulting in the growth of prices and unheard-of unemployment along with a wage-freeze.

The publication of "Agenda for a Generation," the party's election manifesto, only one day before the opening of the conference was one of the Executive's manoeuvres too. The delegates had no time for a close study of the new policy document. In addition, steps had been taken to rule out the possibility of a discussion of the "Agenda" by the party rank-and-file, who received the document only after the conference.

The manifesto was deliberately vague on the position and objectives of the party. Devoted principally to extolling the Labour government's activities in its five years in office, it was indicative of its striving to avoid making any concrete promises to the electorate. It did not say anything definite on problems of deep concern for the British working people, such as the projected entry into the Common Market.

The document's section on foreign policy contained attacks on the Soviet Union, revealing the Labour government's intention to go on refusing to search for ways of bringing about East-West rapprochement and to take steps to ease the tension and set up a European security system.

With such an election manifesto, it was difficult—indeed, impossible—to boost the government's prestige among the British voters, or to inspire confidence in victory in the Labour rank-and-file, among whom disillusionment and discontent with the policy of the government grew to tremendous proportions. A number of Labour candidates were defeated in by-elections even in safe Labour electorates, and the party membership decreased by nearly 110,000. Things came to such a pass that 250,000 trade unionists refused to pay contributions to the party fund in protest against the economic measures of the government.

As at previous conferences, the opposition at Brighton was led by the delegates from the Transport and General Workers' Union, which had 1,000,000 votes, and the Amalgamated Union of Engineering and Foundry Workers, with 700,000 votes. They declared right from the start that they would vote against the manifesto, being opposed to the part expressing support of the economic policy of the government.

On the last day of the conference the "Agenda" was carried by 3,562,000 votes to 2,272,000. The outcome of the vote showed that the two biggest unions had succeeded in winning over to their side more than half a million votes and that, on the other hand, the majority of the delegates had not taken the risk of coming out against the party

leadership with the general election just around the corner.

Although approving, under pressure from the leadership, the "Agenda for a Generation," the conference adopted at the same time a number of progressive resolutions directly or indirectly demanding an internal and foreign policy which would reflect the striving of the working people for social change and a healthier international situation. For example, the resolution on economic questions moved by the TUC and carried by 3,569,000 votes to 2,416,000 demanded the elimination of unemployment, jobs for all, stable prices, a cut in military spending and restrictions on sending capital abroad. Only on this basis, it stated, could the government be assured of the unanimous support of all the elements of the Labour movement. The conference flatly rejected all plans in the field of anti-labour legislation directed against basic trade union rights and freedoms, including the right to strike.

For all their sharp criticism of the government, many delegates, mindful of the coming election, agreed to support the party leadership. The traditional resolution on the activities of the Labour government called upon the party to do everything possible to keep Labour in power. It was adopted, however, without any particular enthusiasm, especially on the part of the trade unions, because the contradictions in the party had not been resolved but merely toned down in view of the approaching election. The existence of serious disagreements within the Labour movement was again demonstrated by the 73rd Scottish TUC, held in April (21-24), 1970. Its resolutions condemned virtually all the main aspects of the Wilson go-

vernment's internal and foreign policy. In the resolution, "Peace to the World," the conference urged the government to support the efforts on behalf of a conference on European security, to ensure fulfilment of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, and to take speedy measures to secure a peaceful settlement in the Middle East on the basis of the Security Council resolution of November 22, 1967. The Left forces strengthened their position in the new Scottish TUC elected at the conference.

That conference was one more stern warning to the Labour government about the discontent growing among the working people, and about the need for a substantial change in its policy.

The Labour leaders ignored this last warning as well and did not take a single practical step that would encourage the party rank-and-file. The result is known—in the parliamentary election in June, the Labour Party was defeated and the Conservatives came to power, collecting 46.4 per cent of the votes and gaining 330 seats, as against Labour's 43 per cent of the votes and 287 seats.

The Labour Party's defeat signified the failure of the Wilson government to prove that it could be a more efficient caretaker for capitalism than the Conservatives. *Comment*, the publication of the Communist Party of Great Britain, had this to say on the results of the election: "The outcome bore out the repeated warnings of the Labour Left, trade union militants and the Communist Party about the danger of a Labour government adopting Tory measures in the economy, the social services and foreign policy. In 1964 and 1966 the people demonstrated they wanted something radically different from the thirteen years of Tory

rule, instead they got the same medicine administered by a different doctor."¹

Frank Cousins, a prominent Labour and trade union leader, who in his time resigned from a ministerial post and gave up his parliamentary seat in protest against Wilson's policies, characterized the root cause of all Labour's reverses in the words: "The tragedy of the Labour Party is that it has discarded socialism."² Correctly understanding the task of the Labour movement, the Labour Left are demanding that a discussion be started on "how we get the policy of the Labour Party back on the road to socialism."³

However, it remains a weakness of the trade union and Labour Left opposition that correct definition of the task and the adoption of resolutions is often not followed up with the measures necessary to carry them out. To overcome this passivity is undoubtedly one of the most formidable and important tasks facing the progressive forces in the British working-class movement.

Rallying all Left forces in the Labour and trade union movement, establishing close and permanent contacts with them, and gradually extending the sphere of cooperation—this is, at the present time, the most important aspect of the struggle of the Communist Party of Great Britain for working-class unity, for winning over the working class to the side of socialism. "The Labour Party and progressive movement has the power, if united and brought into action, to defeat all the Tory attacks," the Communist Party's Political Com-

mittee declared in a statement. "This is no time for defeatism. Into action now to make this Tory government short-lived."¹

* * *

Recent years have witnessed a sharpening of the struggle between the two trends within the Social-Democratic movement. An analysis of this struggle warrants the conclusion that the mass of Social-Democratic supporters are shifting to the left, that an increasing number of rank-and-file Socialists (and some leaders who are shedding their anti-communist prejudices) are going over to a more progressive position on a number of fundamental internal and foreign policy issues.

The ideological and political principles expounded by the Right-wing leaders increasingly reveal their weakness in confrontation with capitalist reality and with the political experience of the masses gained in the course of stiff class battles.

In the 1950's and early 1960's, years characterized by relatively fast rates of economic growth and a certain relaxation of international tension, monopoly capital attempted to blunt the class struggle and thus strengthen its position chiefly by economic, social and even political concessions to the working class, a policy which found its ideological expression in the slogans of "welfare society," "settled society," "consumer society," and so on.

On the one hand, this policy, dictated by the changed correlation of world forces and the in-

¹ *Comment*, July 27, 1970.

² *Unsere Zeit*, July 4, 1970.

³ *Tribune*, June 26, 1970.

¹ *Comment*, June 27, 1970.

creased numerical strength and organization of the proletariat, enabled the working people in some capitalist countries to secure a certain improvement in the living standards; on the other, it contributed for some time to a consolidation of the belief held by some wage and salary earners in the possibility of capitalism changing along the lines indicated by the Social-Democratic leaders, and also to a certain blunting of socialist consciousness in the working class.

Since the mid-sixties increasing reliance has again been put on crude pressure and other disguised forms of suppression of the working-class movement. The reasons behind this are the growing international aggressiveness of imperialism, its striving to adapt to the demands of the scientific and technological revolution, the slowing down of economic growth and the intensification of the class struggle, which social manoeuvring has failed to lessen.

The heightening of reactionary and ultra-reactionary tendencies in the policy of the monopoly bourgeoisie manifests itself in unceasing attempts to trammel what democratic rights and freedoms the working people have, to undermine the prerogatives and authority of bourgeois-democratic bodies of power—parliaments and municipal councils—to strengthen executive power at the expense of legislative power, and to enlarge the repressive apparatus of the state. Increasingly active government interference in labour-capital relations is characteristic of the present time. The machinery of state is being more frequently used to regulate these relations—by no means in the interests of the workers—to restrict the independence of the class organizations of the proletariat, and to re-

distribute the national income in favour of the monopolies.

This purpose is served by the "incomes policy" in Britain and the Netherlands or the policy of government recommendations in the United States and West Germany, the objective of both being to hold back the growth of real wages in a centralized way, to freeze or even reduce wages.

Thus, in recent years a socio-economic situation has been taking shape in the developed capitalist countries which strengthens the striving of the workers for fundamental political and economic changes. Accordingly, the working class is evincing a growing tendency to shift to the left and to play a more active part in the struggle for genuine democracy, against the economic and political hegemony of the monopolies. It follows that this shift cannot but affect the Social-Democratic Parties.

An important contributing factor in this process—also in the Social-Democratic movement and in the reformist trade unions—is the crisis of the foreign policy of imperialism, and its increased aggressiveness. Deep concern over the state of international relations is being felt by more and more people in the capitalist countries. Movements are developing everywhere against the aggressive actions of imperialism and especially against the war in Vietnam, and these movements support an international détente, better East-West relations, and the elimination of all forms of colonial oppression. An increasingly active part is being taken in these movements by members and supporters of Social-Democratic Parties, who demand of their leaders energetic measures to preserve and strengthen peace. Naturally, the latter

cannot ignore the sentiments of the working people making up the mass base of Social Democracy.

At the same time, as international tension grows, the Social-Democratic Parties come under growing pressure from internal and international reaction, which wants their leaders to support more effectively its desperate attempts, dangerous to peace, to change the world balance of forces in its favour. It is not an easy matter for many Social-Democratic Parties to resist this pressure, because their Right-wing leaders have "integrated" themselves into the political mechanism of bourgeois society and lost much of their independence, especially in foreign policy matters, and in some cases have sided completely with the reactionary foreign policy of the ruling elite.

The contradictory position of the Social-Democratic Parties provides an objective basis for the intensification of the struggle between two trends in the foreign policy course of modern Social Democracy. Although the reactionary trend in support of imperialist blocs, anti-communism and colonialism still prevails in the international Social-Democratic movement, there is a symptomatic strengthening of a contrary trend—for a more realistic stand on basic international issues, and for an independent democratic foreign policy line. This trend has manifested itself, for instance, in the direct or indirect condemnation of the United States' aggression in South-East Asia by most Social-Democratic Parties, and in the support by many of them of the proposal for convening a European security conference.

In May 1971, a session of the Council of the Socialist International was held in Helsinki which discussed the problems of European security. After

long debates a resolution was adopted supporting the idea of an all-European security conference. The resolution reflects some positive changes in the foreign policy stand of world Social Democracy since the 11th Congress of the Socialist International in 1969. A number of constructive proposals, are contained in the resolution on disarmament adopted at the session.

The rank-and-file Social Democrats are increasingly realizing that there are no prospects for the Social-Democratic movement if it continues in its old rut. Opinions are frequently expressed to the effect that "Socialism is languishing without an ideology," without "fundamental substantiation of the aims of the movement." No doubt, awareness of the ideological crisis again forces Social-Democratic Parties to reassess the value of the Marxist heritage which was renounced by their Right-wing leaders.

BASIC FEATURES OF COMMUNIST STRATEGY IN DEVELOPED CAPITALIST COUNTRIES

The communist movement owes its ideological and political strength to the scientific theory of Karl Marx, who discovered and substantiated the historical role of the proletariat as the advanced, leading class in the struggle for socialism—the struggle against the social system based on exploitation.

The victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia, which demonstrated the most

effective forms and methods of struggle and revealed new mass allies of the proletariat, thereby extending the front of the struggle against capitalism, imparted an essentially new quality to the revolutionary movement of the working class and greatly increased its scope.

The army of Communists has grown to more than 120 times its size in 1918 and now numbers about 50 million. Communist Parties and groups, the vanguard of their nations, and at the same time component parts of the world ideological and political community of Communists, exist in almost all countries. Owing to their dedicated work Marxism-Leninism has gripped the minds of hundreds of millions of people.

Marxist-Leninist parties are fighting for great humanistic ideals on all the principal revolutionary fronts of our time: the Communist Parties of the socialist camp, the main revolutionary force of our time, exercise guidance over the construction of socialist and communist society, translating into reality the high ideals of scientific communism; more than twenty Communist and Workers' Parties are active in developed capitalist countries; almost fifty Communist Parties are to be found in the countries waging the anti-imperialist struggle for national liberation.

The principal criterion of the correctness of the policy of a Marxist-Leninist party is the practice of the liberation struggle, the results of its activity on behalf of the working class, of all the working people of its country, and of the entire world liberation movement. Communists owe their successes primarily to the fact that, in shaping their policy, strategy and tactics, they proceed from a

scientific analysis of all the factors which have a decisive bearing on the conditions of the struggle and the tasks of the revolutionary working-class movement.

Communists have always regarded Marxism as a guide to action. Revolutionary theory is not a system of canons once established and never changing, containing solutions to all problems, but a teaching on society and the laws of its development, which is constantly being perfected. The founders of Marxism always checked their analysis and conclusions against changing reality, making the necessary corrections in them. A creative approach to Marxist-Leninist theory has been indispensable to the successful activity of the world communist movement and remains so. It is against the spirit of Marxism-Leninism to try to fit world events into ready-made schemes. Historical experience has shown that such attempts invariably lead to serious setbacks and ultimately begin to act as a drag on the world revolutionary process.

Each phase of the world socialist revolution has its distinctive features demanding further elaboration and modification of communist strategy and tactics. First the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and then the world communist forums in Moscow and the congresses of the Communist and Workers' Parties of Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America, examined the most topical and complex problems of our time and outlined new prospects of development of the world revolutionary process based on a study of the correlation of world forces and the law-governed features of development of world socialism and state-monopoly capitalism.

The elucidation and formulation of the principal contradiction of our epoch was of utmost importance for perfecting the strategy and tactics of the world revolutionary movement. In recent years mankind's advance towards socialism has considerably quickened. Socialism has established itself on vast territories in Europe and Asia, and with the victory of the Cuban revolution socialism has come to Latin America as well. Increasing numbers of working people are rallying to its banner. Socialism is becoming a slogan expressing the vital interests and aspirations of all progressive mankind. That is why the contradiction between socialism and imperialism is the central contradiction of our epoch. Without taking it into account it is impossible to grasp the essence of social and political phenomena, to comprehend the role played in the world revolutionary process by each of the forces taking part in it.

In our time the main problems of the development of the world revolutionary process cannot be regarded in isolation from the struggle for a lasting peace on earth. Every victory over the reactionary imperialist forces sharpens internal contradictions in the imperialist camp, weakens the capitalist system as a whole and conduces to the rallying round the working class of the many millions of working people, and of all anti-imperialist forces.

The conclusion of the international communist movement that even in the present epoch mankind can be delivered from the nightmare of a new world war is of the greatest importance to the interests of the peoples of all countries, no matter what concrete economic and political tasks may be facing them.

Peaceful coexistence is not an abstract pacifist slogan but one calling for struggle in which all anti-imperialist forces, the entire working-class movement should take part, because conditions for the independent life of a nation and for socialism are created, not by a homicidal conflict, but by a policy of peace, which makes for confining imperialism within the bounds of its own contradictions.

The increased aggressiveness of imperialism (the escalation of the US war in Indochina, Israeli aggression against Arab peoples, etc.) shows that the reactionaries refuse to give up their methods of military gambles and outright interference in the affairs of other countries.

Revolutionary Marxists have always fought against war as a terrible calamity that hits primarily the working people. Although the wars of the past did lead to an aggravation of antagonistic class contradictions in capitalist society and acted, in the final count, as catalysts of revolutionary processes, Marxist-Leninists invariably stressed that the death of tens of millions of people is too high a price to pay for hastening social progress.

Even in the past, the development of the class struggle and the ripening of revolutionary crises have not necessarily been connected with armed conflicts—for instance, the aggravation of the political situation on the eve of the First World War in Britain, France and Germany or the powerful anti-fascist movements in many European countries in the 1930's. This means that in the past, too, a military conflict has not been indispensable to the ripening of the revolutionary situation. But since the imperialist system as a whole used to be much stronger than now, the likelihood of

breaking the imperialist chain existed only in a few weakest links shaken loose in the course of military conflicts.

Today, the growth of the forces of world socialism and the aggravation of imperialist contradictions are conducive to the successful struggle of the international revolutionary movement, to the victory of socialism on a world scale. It is pointed out in no uncertain terms in documents of international communist forums that there is no task more urgent for the democratic and peace-loving forces of the world than to save mankind from a thermonuclear war.

In carrying out their tasks, Communists take into consideration the degree of socialist progress achieved in the given region of the world, and the specific conditions of every country. Thus, the Marxist-Leninist parties of the socialist community, which are directing the building of socialism and communism, strive to make use of the advantages of the socialist system to speed up the development of the productive forces and to raise the socialist productivity of labour through maximum utilization of the division of labour and cooperation among their countries. The implementation of this task is being furthered by the comprehensive economic reforms now under way in the socialist countries. These reforms will raise still higher the material and cultural standards of the socialist nations and, coupled with further development of socialist democracy, will infuse fresh strength into socialism in its historical competition with capitalism.

The Communist Parties in the young national states regard it as their chief task to combat neocapitalism, to win and consolidate economic in-

dependence, and to eliminate economic, social and cultural backwardness. They are fighting against overt and covert allies of the imperialists among the local reactionary feudalists, compradore bourgeoisie and reactionary military. Communists see the principal means of safeguarding and extending the gains of the national liberation revolution in the going over of the young states to the non-capitalist path of development, and in more effective cooperation with the socialist states.

A correct appraisal of the major changes that have taken place in the capitalist economy, in the class structure, and in the policy and ideology of modern bourgeois society makes it possible to elaborate effective tactics for the working-class movement—tactics which are appropriate to present-day conditions and to the current stage of development of the world revolutionary process. This is not so easy to do because new problems keep cropping up.

The struggle of the working class in the developed capitalist countries for its immediate interests and ultimate aims is taking place at the present time against the background of the democratic movement. Many representatives of new trends have joined the traditional forces of this movement, and the latter too often find themselves fighting under new slogans, for new demands.

For instance, the agricultural workers more opposed than ever to monopoly domination are demanding a fundamental change in the national agrarian policy and state support for farmers' associations and cooperatives. The proletariat is acquiring an important ally in the intelligentsia, most of whom are becoming more clearly and painfully aware of their dependence on the emp-

loyers. The movement of young people, especially students, is also turning into an important anti-monopoly force. It has become one of the most militant and concentrated expressions of the change in the socio-political stand of large sections of the intelligentsia. Characteristically, discontent is in evidence even in the apparatus of state and economic administration. Growing numbers of its rank-and-file employees are tending to cooperate with the democratic forces and, in the final count, with the working class.

Considerable functional changes have been undergone by class and general democratic mass organizations. The political role of the trade unions has grown sharply. Along with purely economic demands they are pressing for the extension of the rights of the working people in production and in the socio-political structure. The importance of the trade unions is increasing also because mass strike movements are developing into nation-wide labour actions against the policy of state-monopoly capitalism as a whole. This is becoming an effective school of unity of working people in the fight against monopoly domination, improving the prospects for overcoming the split in the working class and achieving unity of action by Communists, Social Democrats and progressive-minded Catholics and Protestants.

The peace movement, one of the biggest mass movements of the post-war period, is an example of the important changes which have taken place in the general democratic movement. The vigorous activity of its participants increasingly acts as an inspiration to others, promoting militant action against the reactionary seats of power whose policy of aggression, of stepping up the armaments

race and war preparations endangers the security of people everywhere.

The overall trend, therefore, is for there to be an increase in the share of socio-economic and political tasks in the programmes of democratic movements. Confirming in practice the correctness of the Marxist-Leninist conclusion that the struggle for democracy is inseparable from the struggle for socialism, this evolution of the aims of the general democratic movements leads the people to a conflict with the very system of capitalism, and causes them to reject its fundamental principles.

It is greatly to the credit of the international Communist movement that it has been able, proceeding from an analysis of the changes in the world arena in favour of socialism, the considerable changes in the economic and social structures of modern capitalist society, and the aggravation of its contradictions, manifested in old and new forms, to arrive at a conclusion on the possibility of achieving a concentration of progressive forces within the framework of an anti-monopoly coalition. And this concentration would open up a real prospect of comparatively peaceful, yet revolutionary, transformation of capitalist socio-political and economic structures, of building a new society. This idea of a broad anti-monopoly coalition and of the possibility of relatively peaceful transition to socialism is the basis of communist strategy in the developed capitalist countries.

Communists have always attached primary importance to the working out of a scientifically founded approach to the socialist revolution at every new historical stage, to the problem of its preparation, and to the question of its objective conditions, especially that of the revolutionary si-

tuation—in short, to all the questions on which the strategy and tactics of the revolutionary working-class movement depend. In the post-war period the Communist Parties in the developed capitalist countries were faced with the need to find the answer to the question of how to advance towards the socialist revolution in conditions of the present correlation of class forces in the world, state-monopoly capitalism, scientific and technological progress, changes in the material condition of the working people and the resulting appearance of new factors bearing on the shaping of the social psychology of the working people, their class consciousness.

The problem was whether to wait for the emergence of a revolutionary situation and then to strike the decisive blow, or to make one small gain after another in a stubborn economic and political struggle so as to restrict as far as possible the dominance of monopoly capital before the conquest of power by the working class and its allies.

Having analysed the objective conditions of the present stage of social development, Communists came to this conclusion: fundamental democratic transformations within the framework of modern capitalism should not be postponed till the emergence of a favourable situation, for to give up the struggle for them means to lag behind events, and to give the monopoly bourgeoisie the chance to strengthen its position and to consolidate and extend its influence.

An analysis of the present-day situation in the countries of developed capitalism indicates that the process of revolutionary transformation of society has two principal stages: the democratic (anti-monopoly) stage and the socialist stage proper.

The principal aim of the democratic stage of the revolution is to curb and undermine the power of the monopolies and then, during the transition to the socialist stage, completely to eliminate this power. Accordingly, the Communist Parties put forward a programme of struggle for an extension and rejuvenation of democracy, for political and economic reforms to restrict the power of monopoly capital and the bureaucratic apparatus, and to strengthen the position of the working class by establishing its control in the political and economic life of bourgeois society.

The reason for speaking of an anti-monopoly stage of the revolution in the majority of developed capitalist countries is provided by the further deepening and intensification of contradictions between the working people and the state-monopoly oligarchy, by the growing community of interests of all sections of the population oppressed by the monopolies and by the military-bureaucratic machine. This leads to an extension of the possibilities for them to adhere to the anti-monopoly alternative offered by the Communist Parties. Added to this is the influence of new elements in the strategy of the ruling class, which, under the pressure of the revolutionary struggle of the people, more frequently resorts to such measures as nationalization, regulation, programming, etc., for the sake of its salvation. And the revolutionary forces can effectively use these measures as a starting point in the fight for socialism, and in the first place as spring-board for the attainment of the intermediate aim of replacing monopoly power with the democratic power of an anti-monopoly coalition.

The Communist Parties consider that, at one of the higher stages of the anti-monopoly struggle,

power can and must pass into the hands of the proletariat and its allies. In view of this, slogans of anti-monopoly struggle should be regarded also as a means of uniting all the monopoly-exploited and oppressed sections of society which have not yet realized the need to replace capitalism with socialism. Political unity of the anti-monopoly forces can be realized only in the process of revolutionary transition to the new system, and through the struggle for intermediate aims and demands. Consequently, a fight should be waged for political, social and economic changes which are bound up with one another and which conform to the aspirations of the people, irreversibly changing the correlation of forces in favour of the working class and its allies, weakening the power of the monopoly bourgeoisie, and paving the way for socialism.

These transformations are called fundamental democratic reforms by the French Communists, structural reforms by the Italian Communists, basic reforms by the German Communists, and so on. The essence is, however, the same everywhere—the undermining of the mechanism of monopoly exploitation and political oppression by means of extensive socio-economic and political reforms which, while not yet socialist, nevertheless create the most favourable conditions for progress towards the socialist revolution. Such revolutionary reforms, unthinkable before, have become possible largely thanks to a decisive change in the correlation of world forces in favour of socialism.

In mapping out programmes for profound change, Marxist-Leninist parties work on the idea that the carrying out of these programmes directly depends first of all on the scale and intensity

of the mass action of the working people. That is why, in addition to demonstrations and political strikes in support of reforms, the Communist Parties and the trade unions, adhering to consistently class positions, organize struggles for genuine worker participation in management, for the establishment of workers' control at enterprises (especially large ones) and producers' cooperatives, and for gaining positions in representative bodies at all levels, etc. They also exert every effort to uphold the autonomy and independence of workers' organizations and their representatives in different bodies, to prevent their integration in the state-monopoly system.

As distinct from the reformist parties, to which reforms are an aim in themselves and are divorced from the socialist perspective, the revolutionary proletarian parties plan and carry out an active campaign for reforms. The essence of their strategy consists in its being designed to undermine the power of the monopolies, put the monopoly bourgeoisie in an increasingly difficult position, and prevent it from "assimilating" and adapting to reforms. This can be achieved only if the people are increasingly active in their support of these reforms and in ensuring that they are carried out under democratic control. Hence the necessity of ever increasing pressure by the people, of closely coordinated parliamentary and extra-parliamentary actions and legal forms of mass struggle and also those that violate bourgeois law, and of formulating such demands and slogans as would ensure this coordination and bring home to the people the need to fight for power.

To the Communist Parties the struggle for reforms has never been an end in itself. They regard

reforms as merely a step on the long and difficult road to the conquest of power by the proletariat and its vanguard. The demand for reforms does not push into the background the ultimate aim of the Communists, which is socialism. Only a long, hard and constant struggle making use of every possibility and of the entire power of the mass organizations can break the resistance of the monopolies and give a consistently revolutionary character to reforms. Communists strive to turn every reform which they champion into a bridgehead for further advance. The aim of this struggle is not only to improve the position of the working people but gradually to extend the influence of democratic organizations, to convince the working people that fundamental changes are possible only on the road to socialism.

In the course of the struggle for radical democratic reforms, the working people acquire political experience, come to realize that the monopoly oligarchy is their principal enemy, and raise the level of their organization and fighting ability. By its struggle for democratic reforms the working class wins the confidence of its allies and rallies round itself all anti-monopoly forces. In this way, in the process of the struggle for important democratic reforms, the political army of the socialist revolution comes into being. That is why the struggle for democracy has become an inseparable part of the struggle for socialism.

Under modern state-monopoly capitalism the struggle for democracy becomes particularly acute because of the growth of centralist-bureaucratic, authoritarian trends in the development of the bourgeois state, along with the preservation of the democratic façade. The state-monopoly oli-

garchy has learned how to eviscerate democratic freedoms and institutions by highly "democratic" methods, including referendums.

The Communist Parties closely study the possibilities of making use of the political institutions of the modern capitalist state. Following Lenin's counsel regarding the need for the working class to master all types and forms of social activity and thereby to strengthen its position in all representative bodies, they work tirelessly to utilize such democratic institutions as parliament and the local bodies, and they try to impart to them a new, genuinely democratic character. At the same time they do not rule out the possibility of new democratic institutions appearing as a result of the revolutionary creative efforts of the people, particularly during the struggle for economic democracy. They also support the idea of a multiplicity of parties, both in the transitional period and under socialism.

Many Communist Parties of Western Europe speak of an intermediate form of power ("advanced democracy" is the term used by the French Communist Party; "renovated democracy" is the slogan of the Italian Communist Party; "anti-monopoly democracy" is advocated by the West German Communists, etc.) under which the cooperation of the working class with its allies is possible when the power of the monopolies is being destroyed.

The majority of the West European Communist Parties base their strategy on a relatively peaceful development of the socialist revolution. The arguments which they bring forward in favour of a peaceful transition to socialism can be summed up as follows: first, the victory of socialism in the

Soviet Union and some other countries, the establishment of the world socialist system and the successes of the national liberation movement have weakened the world capitalist system considerably, creating favourable external conditions for a peaceful transition to socialism; second, the objective development of the class struggle in these countries is conducive to the gradual building-up of such a preponderance of the revolutionary forces united in an anti-monopoly bloc (front, coalition, alliance, etc.), and headed by the working class, that it will be difficult for the monopoly bourgeoisie to offer armed resistance to the people.

The Communist Parties point out over and over again that a peaceful transition to socialism is neither more nor less than a social revolution. The concept of peaceful accomplishment of the socialist revolution applies to the form and not the content of the revolutionary process. Whatever its form, this process is unthinkable without revolutionary compulsion and coercion with regard to monopoly capital. The bourgeoisie has to be forced to surrender, and prevented from unleashing a civil war. In this way the birth of the new system will be brought about. And only a broad and powerful movement of the people can check imperialist reaction.

Communists recognize the need for the use of force in some form or other during the transition to socialism, knowing that the monopoly bourgeoisie is almost certain to resist frantically the expropriation of its property and the replacement of the capitalist mode of production by the socialist one. But they stress that it is preferable for the working people to employ non-violent forms of coercion, and with the help of thoroughly planned

action by the proletariat and its allies, to create a situation in which the ruling monopoly bourgeoisie will be compelled to retreat before the superior forces of the anti-monopoly coalition headed by the working class, which will thus take power in a relatively peaceful way.

In present conditions the formation of the political revolutionary force—including, and especially, an anti-monopoly coalition—demands of the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat tremendous ideological, political and organizational work among the people and in their organizations. It is perfectly obvious that this is just what Lenin had in mind when he wrote back in 1920—referring to the specific situation in the developed capitalist countries (a strong and experienced bourgeoisie, considerable influence of reformism, the level of development of bourgeois democracy, etc.)—that it would be more difficult for these countries than for Russia to start the socialist revolution but easier to bring it to its consummation.

It should be borne in mind that the formation of broad anti-monopoly coalitions does not in any way signify a slackening of the struggle for the class independence of the proletariat; on the contrary, it presupposes its intensification. The task of freeing the working class from ideological and political dependence on other classes, thoroughly elaborated by Marx, Engels and Lenin, remains central for the working class of all capitalist countries without exception. Far from running counter to the interests of other working people, its realization is a prerequisite of the deliverance of all society from the yoke of capital.

The alliance of the working class with non-proletarian democratic movements is the firmer the

more deeply its participants are aware of their fundamental interests and of the prospects for their realization. This alliance cannot be built on relations of subordination or on tactical compromise. The way to rally the majority of working people round the revolutionary proletarian vanguard—the need for which Lenin repeatedly pointed out to the Communists of Western Europe in the first years of the Communist International—is in the recognition of the independence of each of the participants in the anti-monopoly struggle and of the distinctness of his contribution to it. It is alien to the very spirit of Communists to treat the other participants in the democratic movements as “the mass to be manoeuvred.” In the breadth and activity of the social basis of such movements, Communists see first of all evidence of their viability, and an essential condition for their remaining democratic in character and anti-monopoly in trend. As the situation becomes favourable for an offensive by the democratic forces against the position of the monopolies, so increases the responsibility of the working class and its revolutionary vanguard for uniting and for coordinating the efforts of all the participants in the general democratic movement. The performance of this mission not only presupposes, but directly demands, vigorous action on the part of the conscious proletarian vanguard, including ideological work in a militant spirit. Only by showing that it can uphold its interests in every sphere of the class struggle does the working class vindicate its claim to the leading role in the anti-monopoly coalition.

It can perform this role successfully only after securing the unity of its own ranks. The discontent of the different classes and strata of capital-

ist society will merge into a single anti-monopoly stream faster and more effectively as the main political trends in the working-class movement in the capitalist world, as represented by the Communist and Social-Democratic Parties, progress along the road of joint action.

CHAPTER V

UNITY OF ACTION OF WORKERS' PARTIES: A VITAL NECESSITY

The experience of the working-class movement shows beyond a shadow of doubt that success in the struggle for both the partial demands of the working class and for the ultimate goal, socialism, is impossible without working-class unity. A united proletariat can not only repel the attacks of the bourgeoisie but can wrest important economic and social concessions from it, and make appreciable political gains

and successfully uphold them. Conversely, a split in the working class is the cause of many of its setbacks and reverses.

Now, what factors favour working-class unity and what factors militate against it?

At the present time the influence of objective factors conducive to unity of the working-class movement is particularly great. This is the result of the unprecedented concentration of production, the rapid numerical growth of the working class, the aggravation of class antagonisms in the capitalist world, and the higher level of organization and political consciousness of the working class. The scientific and technological revolution has hastened the obliteration of distinctions between different types of labour, and between different sections of the working class, including distinctions between experienced workers and newcomers. Engineers, technicians, office employees and factory workers are growing increasingly aware of the community of their social interests.

Another factor objectively contributing to working-class unity is the striving of monopoly capital to step up exploitation, to nullify the economic and social gains of the working class, and to make the working people pay for the armaments race, for technological progress, etc. With the help of capitalist integration, the monopolies are pooling their efforts internationally in order to break the resistance of the national contingents of the working class. But the only effect of this is to spur the workers to strengthen their solidarity on both a national and an international scale.

Working-class unity is essential to success in the fight against the onslaught of state-monopoly capitalism on democratic rights and freedoms. Hi-

storical experience shows that a split in the working-class movement makes it easier for the bourgeoisie to establish reactionary and fascist regimes, and to abolish trade unions and other progressive organizations.

The danger of a thermonuclear war emanating from imperialism makes the unity of the working class imperative. More and more workers are coming to realize the need to counter the imperialist policy of militarization of the economy and military gambles with a militant front of joint struggle for a lasting peace.

The growth of the numerical strength and influence of the trade and political organizations of the working class, and above all of Communist Parties, is another effective factor making for working-class unity. As the vanguard of the working class, equipped with the knowledge of the laws of social development and class struggle, Communists are resolutely and consistently working for proletarian unity.

Among the objective international factors favouring unity of the working class, the world socialist system is becoming increasingly important by the force of its example and by its influence. This unity is also furthered by the vigorous development of national liberation revolutions. Actions against colonialism, in support of the liberation struggle of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America strengthen the solidarity of the workers of the capitalist countries and all over the world.

Broad non-proletarian strata of the population are objectively interested in the joint struggle for peace, democracy and social progress. In view of this a special historical responsibility devolves on the working class, round which all anti-monopoly

forces can and must unite. Awareness of this responsibility certainly becomes a powerful stimulus to rallying the ranks of the working class itself.

But working-class unity cannot come about spontaneously, of its own accord. Under capitalism there also operates a contrary trend disuniting workers.

Because it regards working-class unity as a mortal danger to its dominance, the bourgeoisie is doing its utmost to keep the working class divided. It takes into consideration the objective factors that divide workers in capitalist society. For example, the need for the workers to sell their labour power gives rise to competitive struggle preventing their unity. Other contributing factors are the heterogeneous composition of the working class, the constant influx into it of urban and rural petty-bourgeois elements with their private-proprietor mentality, as well as of immigrants, and the ideological and political influence of other classes and strata.

Imperialism has given rise to a number of phenomena which the bourgeoisie utilizes to deepen the split in the working class. It has begun spending a fraction of its colossal profits on direct and indirect bribing of part of the working class—the labour aristocracy and labour bureaucracy—which it counterposes to the bulk of the workers.

The monopoly bourgeoisie is trying to deepen the split in the working class also with the help of new refined forms of exploitation of the proletariat, and of perfected methods of influencing the workers ideologically and politically. The policy of "social partnership," for instance, which is designed to induce the working people to give up the class struggle in exchange for "profit sharing,"

has been widely circulated. This policy suggests to the workers that they can, and, indeed, do, cease being workers and turn into small capitalists.

The so-called voluntary social expenditures also serve as a powerful lever in the hands of the capitalists. For instance, the receipt by a worker of an additional pension is made conditional on his having worked a definite number of years which is determined by the employer. The size of this pension is fixed on the basis of the earnings received in the course of several years preceding retirement on pension. Since this number of years is also established by the employer, he is in a position to bring pressure to bear on the workers for considerable periods of time. The same is often the case with the provision of flats or of accommodation at the kindergartens owned by the employer.

In splitting the working class, the bourgeoisie exploits the survivals of petty-bourgeois mentality among some of the engineers, technicians and office employees who are joining the ranks of the proletariat. It actively employs methods of anti-communism and clericalism and makes use of the difficulties that are sometimes experienced by socialist countries. It constantly exerts itself to disunite workers on the factory floor, to undermine the solidarity of the workers at individual factories and on a national scale.

On top of this, the bourgeoisie resorts also to violent methods of struggle against the working-class movement, such as use of the police and troops against strikers and demonstrators, the banning of progressive organizations, and persecution of the finest representatives of the proletariat, etc. The reason for this is that the bourgeois-

sie cannot suppress the struggle of the workers by its "peaceful" divisive policies alone, because, as noted earlier, factors favouring workers' unity are operating with increasing effectiveness.

The conclusion which can be drawn from the fact of the existence of two opposite trends in the working class under capitalism is that unity has to be fought for.

There are a number of factors that help maintain divisions within the working class in the developed capitalist countries. First, large sections of the working people either support bourgeois parties or are debarred from political life. Second, almost all developed capitalist countries have two, and sometimes more, workers' parties. Third, in a number of countries there are several trade union centres of different political orientation. This is largely responsible for the complexity, unevenness and long duration of the process of overcoming the split. This process involves not only the establishment, in some form or other, of unity of action of workers' parties and trade unions, but also the freeing of a part of the working class from bourgeois influence and involving it in active political struggle within the framework of the organized working-class movement.

Of paramount importance for the attainment of working-class unity in the majority of developed capitalist countries is cooperation between Communist and Social-Democratic (Socialist) Parties. The bulk of the industrial workers and a considerable part of the other categories of working people support, in some way or another, either the Communist Party or the Social-Democratic Party, and if new successes are to be achieved, and in particular if past successes are to be con-

solidated, it is essential that the two parties work together—that there be unity of action.

The international working-class movement has accumulated substantial experience of such unity. In the struggle for it the Communists start from a number of principles which have been borne out in practice.

In their policy towards the Socialist Parties the Communists are guided exclusively by the interests of the working class. They regard the Socialist workers as their class brothers. For the sake of unity of action they are ready to, and do, make certain compromises and concessions as long as these do not run counter to Marxist-Leninist principles and to the interests of the working people. They support every practical step on the part of the Social Democrats contributing to the anti-monopoly struggle, however small the step may be. When working for unity of action in the struggle for some definite aim in the interests of the working class they do not put forward any other conditions but those which are directly instrumental in attaining this aim. This aim, once attained, becomes itself a starting point for the further development of unity of action.

It is known, for instance, that democratic control over capital investments, credit and prices is often held by the Social Democrats to be an absolute, and is presented by them as the means of building socialist society. In proposing similar measures, the Communists regard them primarily as an effective means of restricting the power of monopoly capital making it possible to bring home to the working class the need of struggle for remaking society on genuinely socialist principles.

The difference in approach to these measures, their different interpretation, cannot be an obstacle to unity of action for the purpose of putting them into effect. If the Social Democrats fight to curb the monopolies and consider that thereby they are already building socialism, the working-class movement will make a substantial step forward even though this view is theoretically erroneous.

Work among the supporters of Social Democracy is regarded by the Communists as essential to success in their pursuit of working-class unity. This does not mean, however, that the Communists do not want unity of action with Social Democrats at other levels. They are in favour of unity at all levels, from primary organizations to leading bodies.

The work of Communists for unity of action finds its chief expression in the trade unions, at enterprises, in mass organizations, and in the carrying out of different political campaigns. The Communist Parties are concentrating their efforts on securing unity of action by the people, which is essential for success in the class struggle. Experience shows them that to achieve this it is necessary to maintain constant close contacts with the Social Democrats, to know the interests, thoughts and aspirations of the Socialist working people. Of great importance is a knowledge of working, social and political conditions and of the causes of class conflicts, not only on a national scale, but also at every individual factory and enterprise.

How difficult, drawn-out and contradictory the process of securing unity of action is, can be seen even from the experience of the working-class movement in those countries where the greatest

successes have been achieved in this respect in recent years. For instance, in France the onslaught of reaction on democratic institutions and organizations led to the establishment of actual unity of action of the French Communist Party, the Socialist Party of France (SFIO) and the United Socialist Party in the parliamentary elections of 1962. This unity of action made it possible to restrict the negative effect of the anti-democratic electoral system and increase workers' representation in the National Assembly. The SFIO congress in June 1963 adopted a decision on the possibility of the pursuit by the party, together with the Communists, of joint defensive tactics against reaction. For all the limited scope of this decision, which, in addition, was accompanied by numerous reservations and anti-communist attacks, it was indicative of a certain positive change of that party's attitude towards the French Communist Party.

The joint actions of the Communists and Socialists spurred on the Right wing of the SFIO in their efforts to prevent rapprochement between the two workers' parties. In the municipal elections in March 1965, the SFIO leaders adopted a dual stand: they agreed to the presentation of joint lists where they expected results favourable to them, while in other districts they refused to do so and came to terms, instead, with bourgeois parties, including the Gaullist one, which in many localities split the Left forces.

Displaying a high sense of responsibility for the future of the country, the Communist Party continued to work for the unity of all progressive forces, stressing time and time again its readiness to act jointly with the Socialists in the fight for

a genuinely democratic regime, for the vital demands of the working people, for the establishment of a democratic electoral bloc.

Soon after the presidential elections (December 1965) the FCP addressed a number of organizations, and in the first place the SFIO, with a proposal to set up a broad union of democratic forces based on a coordinated programme of action.

The programme which the Communists suggested as a basis for discussion by the Left organizations aimed at installing a democratic, stable government accountable to a representative National Assembly. In the economic field it provided for further development of the productive forces on the basis of democratic nationalization of enterprises of vital importance to the country, mobilization of all the resources of the country in keeping with a democratic plan, and introduction of a just taxation system. In the social sphere emphasis was laid on the raising of wages, shortening of the working day, improvement of the social security and public education systems, and expansion of housing construction. The part dealing with foreign policy gave prominence to a consistent policy of disarmament and collective security.

It was only in December 1966, that the leadership of the Federation of the Democratic and Socialist Left (FDSL), of which the SFIO was the principal member, agreed to start negotiations with the Communist Party, and these culminated on December 20 in the signing of an electoral agreement.

However, the political significance of the FCP-FDSL agreement was determined not only, and

not so much, by the hammering out of a common electoral strategy, as by the fact that, as Waldeck Rochet, FCP General Secretary, emphasized, the two organizations had found a basis of joint action for their aims. It included a constitutional reform to lead to the abrogation or revision of the articles which legally sanctioned the one-man regime; a guarantee of individual and collective freedoms; abolition of the restrictions on the right to strike; recognition of trade unions at enterprises, and so on. It was stressed in the agreement that both organizations, desirous of a policy of progress and development, would work to secure nationalization of the munitions industry and commercial banks, and democratic management of the nationalized sector, a rise in wages and pensions, full employment, democratization of the taxation system, etc.

Foreign policy issues were the object of particularly serious disagreements during the elaboration of the joint action programme. As was pointed out in the document, "the delegations do not conceal their divergencies on important issues of foreign policy (about all on the attitude towards NATO-Auth.). But they support any initiative on universal, simultaneous and controlled disarmament. In particular they are in favour of France's return to the Geneva Conference, peaceful coexistence and political, economic and cultural contacts with all countries, and peaceful settlement of international conflicts. They regard as necessary an immediate discontinuation of American bombing raids on North Vietnam and strict implementation of the Geneva agreements."¹ Expressing their opposition to the ato-

¹ *Pravda*, December 23, 1966.

mic armament of West Germany, the two organizations expressed their support for the establishment of both European and global collective security systems, and for the recognition of the Oder-Neisse frontier.

"We believe that the December 20 agreement is a major success of the policy of unity and alliance formulated by our 17th Congress, for the alliance is indisputably an important step forward in our struggle," Waldeck Rochet said in his report to the 18th Congress of the FCP held in January 1967.

"To be sure," he continued, "it should not be concluded from this that all the obstacles on the way to unity have now been removed. Further development of unity of action will depend first of all on the growth of trends towards unity among the people themselves."¹

After the parliamentary elections of March 1967, the FCP invited the FDSL to consider the possibility of working out a common programme. In the summer of 1967 the two organizations decided to instruct a joint commission to study concurring standpoints as well as disagreements in order to establish aims common to both sides. By October, the commission had completed its work, and on February 24, 1968, representatives of the FCP and the FDSL adopted a statement which constituted one more step towards the unity of Left forces.

Although it was still not a joint action programme necessary for a democratic government to come to power, the new document was not a mere reaffirmation of the December 20 (1966) agree-

ment, either. There were many more coinciding viewpoints on the three groups of problems thoroughly discussed in the statement, namely, the defence of freedoms and democratic institutions, economic and social matters, and foreign policy.

The two sides reaffirmed their opposition to the one-man regime and expressed agreement on the necessity for joint struggle against it, until it was done away with and a genuine democracy established enabling every citizen to take part in the work of central and local government bodies.

The FCP and the FDSL not only condemned the internal policy of the government but formulated a whole number of concrete proposals aimed at promoting economic progress, growth of the purchasing power, of wages, pensions and benefits, full employment, consolidation and improvement of the social security, educational and vocational training systems, the development of science, agriculture and housing construction, and other social measures.

In the foreign policy field, the sides spoke out for renunciation of the atomic strike force and in support of initiatives for: the signing by France of the Moscow test-ban treaty, reduction of armaments, nuclear non-proliferation, the establishment of atom-free zones in Europe, and the organization of a European collective security system, with recognition of the Oder-Neisse frontier as a primary condition for this.

On Vietnam, the sides agreed on the need for an immediate and unconditional discontinuation of the American bombing of North Vietnam, an early political settlement of the conflict on the basis of the Geneva agreements—which envisage, among other things, the right of the Vietnamese

¹ *Pravda*, January 5, 1967.

people to decide their own destiny—and France's recognition of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

On the Middle East, it was agreed that peace should be restored on the basis of recognition of the state of Israel and respect for the sovereignty of the Arab states, in keeping with the Security Council resolution of November 22, 1967.

The two sides condemned the dictatorial regimes in Spain, Portugal and Greece and reaffirmed their resolve to continue joint actions within the framework of the movement of solidarity with the peoples of these countries.

They noted that the Common Market, which had become a fact of international reality, was dominated by cartels, trusts and international pressure groups, and they pointed to the need to impart to it a new economic and social content that would accord with the interests of the working people.

"An analysis of the February 24 Statement will show that we have taken another step towards unity," noted François Billoux, member of the Political Bureau of the FCP Central Committee. "And not only because there is a wider margin of agreement, but also because consistent operation of agreement and joint statements is bound, gradually, to remove the obstacles to an effective common programme."¹

However, during the events of May and June 1968, the Social-Democratic leaders rejected a programme of joint action with the Communists. "Our Communist Party spared no effort to achieve firm agreement of the Left parties and ma-

jor trade unions on the basis of a common programme of democratic change," Waldeck Rochet said at the 1969 Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties. "...The Socialist leaders obstinately rejected this. In secret, they even agreed to adventurist combinations inspired by anti-communism. The situation was exploited by the Gaullist power."¹

The same course, detrimental to the working class, was steered by the Social-Democratic leaders during the acute political crisis in 1969. The victory of the democratic forces in the referendum of April 27, 1969, which led to de Gaulle's resignation, was indicative of the striving of the working people for change. But the splitting manoeuvre of the Socialist leaders, who nominated for president Gaston Defferre, a diehard opponent of cooperation with the Communists, rendered a Left alliance impossible in the presidential elections.

In the first ballot of these elections, held on June 1, 1969, the Communists nominated their own candidate, Jacques Duclos, and collected almost five million votes (more than 21 per cent), which was an important success. G. Defferre, the SFIO candidate, was defeated, polling only about five per cent of the votes. The failure of the Socialist Party showed that many Socialist workers wanted no part of the splitting policies of their leaders.

In July 1969, a new Socialist Party was founded. Its leaders having drawn conclusions from the sad experience of their predecessors show greater consideration for the striving for joint actions

¹ *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties*, p. 113.

¹ *World Marxist Review*, No. 5, 1968, p. 33.

that has been growing among the Socialist working people of late. Owing partly to this, but primarily thanks to the untiring efforts of the FCP, the cooperation between the two parties, which had slowed down considerably through the fault of the Socialist leaders in the previous period, has begun to make progress again.

On March 5, 1970, a top-level meeting between the FCP and the new Socialist Party worked out the provisions of an agreement between the two parties. The main point of the agreement is the one on the establishment of four joint working groups to study the four following questions and to issue recommendations on them: organization of joint rebuff to the reactionary forces; problems of socialism; ways of transition to socialism; advanced democracy. Each group has two heads, a Communist and a Socialist. The task of the first group, headed by Roland Leroy, member of the Political Bureau of the FCP Central Committee, and André Boulloche, a Socialist, is to draft proposals stimulating joint actions by the two parties. Among the already realized proposals of this group, mention can be made of the joint celebration of the May Day of 1970, in which all the most representative political and trade union organizations of the working class took part for the first time since 1947, and the unprecedented demonstration, held on the initiative of the Communist and Socialist Parties, of a thousand town mayors assembled in Paris for their congress.

Addressing the Lenin centenary meeting in the Mutualité Hall in April 1970, Georges Marchais, a Deputy General Secretary of the FCP Central Committee, declared: "In the recent period successes are to be observed, encouraging though

not yet big ones, in developing Socialist-Communist unity of action. We are firmly resolved to do our utmost for these successes to continue.

"But for the working-class and democratic movement to develop and become politically predominant, the Left parties should put forward, jointly, definite plan round which all fighting forces could rally.

"The working people, the Democrats, want to know where they are going. They want the Left forces to fight together, to declare jointly what they offer for the future, what they will be doing jointly when administering the affairs of the country. . . . As we see it, this agreement should take the form of a common programme of struggle and governmental activity. This programme would be an honest, long-term obligation of the Left parties towards the country."¹

A purposeful and consistent policy of unity has been pursued since the mid-fifties by the Communist Party of Finland. The Appeal on the question of unity, which its Central Committee issued in 1954 and in which the Party declared its readiness to cooperate with the Social-Democratic Party for the sake of a policy conforming to the interests of the people, was favourably received in the working-class movement, the trade unions included. But the leadership of the SDP at that time did not support the Communist initiative. Moreover, in subsequent years the anti-Communist and anti-Soviet tendencies in the Finnish Social-Democratic leadership grew noticeably stronger, a development which was in no small

¹ *L'Humanité*, April 22, 1970.

measure furthered by the election, in 1957, of Väinö Tanner, a rabid anti-Sovietist, to the post of chairman of the Social-Democratic Party. In 1958, when the workers' parties won a parliamentary majority, the SDP leadership, headed by Tanner, categorically refused to cooperate with the Communists at governmental level. And before the presidential elections of 1962, the Right-wing leaders of the SDP set up a bloc with the aim of replacing Urho Kekkonen with an extreme Rightist. But they failed completely. The anti-Communist intrigues of Tanner and his associates led the Social Democrats to their heaviest-ever defeat also in the parliamentary elections held in the same year.

The reverses resulting from the Rightist policies of the SDP leadership caused serious discontent in the party. Its congress in 1963 made changes in the leadership. In particular, a new chairman of the SDP was elected. The party's political course also changed—the Social Democrats began to oppose the government's pro-monopoly activity more firmly. The party gradually came to realize the need for strengthening friendly relations between Finland and the Soviet Union.

A powerful impetus to the bringing about of the cooperation of all working-class parties was given by the parliamentary elections of March 6, 1966, in which the Left scored a major victory, winning 103 seats out of 200: the SDP received 55 seats, the Finnish People's Democratic League (FPDL) of which the Communist Party is the principal component, 41 seats, and the Social-Democratic Workers' and Smallholders' Union, seven.

Inter-party talks on the formation of a new government lasted for more than two months,

with the Right forces trying to keep the Communists out of it. But the programme with which the FPDL contested the elections, the prevailing mood in the party and the general correlation of political forces frustrated the reactionaries' designs. The government set up in May 1966 included, in addition to President Kekkonen's Centre Party, representatives of all the workers' parties of Finland: the Social-Democratic and Communist Parties and the Social-Democratic Workers' and Smallholders' Union. Thus Finland became the first capitalist country where, for the first time in many years, agreement on government-level cooperation of all Left forces was achieved.

The programme of the new Finnish government stressed the need for a relaxation of international tension, further development of cooperation with the Soviet Union, an end to the war in South-East Asia, and general disarmament. On the domestic plane, the programme envisaged acceleration of the country's economic development, elimination of unemployment, democratic tax and school reforms, and other progressive measures.

CPF Chairman Aarne Saarinen said in his speech at the 1969 International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties: "Our political work of recent years was oriented on creating a front of the working-class movement and other democratic forces against big capital and political reaction, on consolidating the peaceful foreign policy of our country, improving the living conditions of the working people and achieving broader democratic rights. We hold these central political aims before us in all our activity in the working-class movement, the democratic mass organizations, the parliament and even the government,

in which representatives of our party have been participating for more than three years. . . .

"Experience shows that a Communist Party has to face up to new and difficult problems whenever it has to decide on whether or not to participate in the government of a capitalist country as a minority when the general political promises are not yet at hand for radical, profound and rapid changes in society. . . .

"The policy of the government, unsatisfactory and disappointing in many respects from the point of view of the working class, created certain difficulties for all the governing parties, ours included, for our participation had evoked more hope and greater expectations than could be realistically expected from it in the prevailing political situation."¹

One of the causes of these difficulties is that, as the last SDP congress (June 1969) showed, there are Rightist, anti-Communist elements in the party seeking allies in the bourgeois camp and intriguing against working-class unity and Socialist-Communist cooperation. Besides, there are "intermediate" trends in the SDP which regard joint actions by the workers' parties as a temporary phenomenon necessitated by the situation, and try to use it in their narrow partisan interests. It was these elements who sabotaged the adoption of drastic measures by the government to improve the condition of the working people for which the Communists were pressing.

The bourgeois parties took advantage of the workers' and small farmers' discontent with the

policy of the government to weaken the position of the workers' parties in the parliament in the elections of March 1970 (the SDP lost four and the FPDL, five seats).

But the reactionary forces did not succeed in preventing the development of cooperation between the workers' parties. Owing to the consistent stand of the CPF and those forces in the SDP which stand for working-class unity of action, Communist-Socialist cooperation in the new government, now headed by the Centre Party, was renewed. Five out of the sixteen ministerial posts are held by the SDP and three, by the FPDL. By prolonging the Finnish-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, this government buried the reactionaries' hopes of tying Finland to the NATO policy.

And although the coalition government in which the Communists and Social Democrats participated fell apart in March 1971, cooperation between the two parties continues to develop.

For more than twenty years (1934-56) the pact on unity of action between the Communist and Socialist Parties of Italy was effective. Communist-Socialist unity was one of the sources of the high militancy of the Italian working class, of its strength and influence on the political life of the country.

In 1956 Pietro Nenni and his supporters in the ISP leadership backed down on the pact but in the course of several years did not interfere with the actual cooperation of the two parties in elections, in the parliament, local bodies and the Italian General Confederation of Labour, the biggest trade union centre of the country affiliated with the World Federation of Trade Unions. In

¹ *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties*, pp. 67, 68.

1962, however, they started curtailing cooperation with the ICP in all spheres.

Having reneged on unity of action with the Communists, the ISP leadership allied itself politically with the Christian-Democratic Party (CDP), which is closely linked with big capital. The Socialist Party's participation in the government at the side of the CDP constituted the basis of the so-called Centre-Left experiment with the aim of splitting the working-class movement and isolating and weakening the Communist Party. It was big capital that turned out to be the gainer, for by agreeing to participate in the government the ISP committed itself to support the Demochristians' reactionary policy, relinquishing, one after another, its own positions.

In November 1965, the congress of the ISP adopted, under the pressure of the party's Right-wing leaders, a decision on the party's merger with the Italian Social-Democratic Party into what became known as the United Socialist Party. The two parties united on the platform of the ideological and political views of the Right-wing leadership of the ISDP. Objecting to this step, Ricardo Lombardi, a prominent spokesman of the Left wing of the ISP, declared that the ISP was committing a grave mistake by choosing, as the only and privileged interlocutor, the Italian Social-Democratic Party, with which it had always differed on all major issues. While deciding to remain in the party, Lombardi and his supporters stressed that they would fight against reformist and divisive policies.

The ISP-ISDP merger was criticized and condemned by all the truly Left forces in the Italian working-class movement. Firstly, because it was

not a step towards the unity of the working-class and socialist forces but one which deepened divisions among the working people and democratic forces of Italy, and was based on the rejection of any contact and cooperation with the Communist Party and the other Left forces in the working-class movement. Secondly, the union effected on the Social-Democratic ideological and political basis signified the Socialists' renunciation of the traditions of class and socialist struggle.

Mindful of the fundamental interests of the working-class and democratic movements, the Italian Communists urged the USP to agree to unity of action which, despite the serious ideological and political differences, could unite all the Left forces.

Without this cooperation there was no possibility of overcoming the resistance of reaction, securing an extension of the rights of the working people, and implementing radical democratic reforms aimed against the economic and political power of the monopolies and conducive to a greater recognition by the working people of the need to fight for socialism.

Subsequent political developments showed that the participation of the Right-wing Socialists in the "Centre-Left" government, their meek acceptance of the Atlantic policy, the rejection by the ISP of unity of action with the ICP and its unprincipled union with the ISDP, seriously impaired, in the first place, the Socialists' influence on the masses. For example, in the parliamentary elections of May 19, 1968, the Italian Socialist Party lost more than 1.5 million votes compared with the 1963 elections, sustaining the biggest losses in industrially developed regions. At the same time, the ICP gained almost 788,000 votes, with its total

vote exceeding eight million. About 1.5 million votes were polled by the Italian Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity (ISPPU), which was founded in January 1964, and was taking part in its first parliamentary elections. The defeat of the ISP, which had opposed working-class unity, and the success of the ICP and the ISPPU, champions of Left unity of action, showed that the Italian working class denied support to the divisive policy of Pietro Nenni and his entourage in the ISP leadership.

The electoral defeat deepened the crisis in the United Socialist Party, in which five trends developed, ranging from the extreme Right to the Left, each with a platform of its own. The Left trend, led by Lombardi, advocated unity of action with the Communists.

Disquieted by the centrifugal trends in the party, the Right-wing leadership undertook a series of attempts to "restore order" in the USP, and to silence the opposition. Specifically, great hopes were reposed by it in the coming party congress. However, the congress, held in October 1968, did not justify these hopes. It only demonstrated how disunited the party was. Things reached a point where the most important resolutions could not even be put to the vote. Practically the only "achievement" of the congress was the renaming of the party to the Italian Socialist Party-Italian Section of the Socialist International (ISP-ISSI).

At the cost of further capitulation before the Right wing of the CDP and the deepening of the crisis in its own ranks, the ISP-ISSI galvanized the "Centre-Left" government.

But the Right-wing leadership of the party was unable to use the respite for affirming its unprincipled opportunistic course and crushing the op-

position groups. All of them demanded, with greater or lesser consistency, a reappraisal of both the internal and foreign policy of the party, but invariably came up against the obstinate unwillingness of the Rights to allow even the slightest change.

The polarization of the Socialist forces led in July 1969, to the establishment by the Right trends of the so-called Unitarian Socialist Party, whose ideological and political positions differed virtually not at all from those of the former ISDP. It even retained the old emblem of the Social Democrats—the rising sun. The United Socialist Party ceased to exist, breaking up, in fact, into the same parts from which it had been artificially constructed in 1965.

The short and inglorious existence of the ISP-ISSI demonstrated the futility of the attempts of the Right-wing leaders to put paid to the joint struggle of the Communists and Socialists for the interests of the working people, to check the process of the rallying of the ranks of the working class and all democratic forces.

The trend for cooperation with the Communists received a new strong impetus as a result of the regional elections of June 7 and 8, 1970. On June 18, the ISP leadership unanimously adopted a resolution instructing the Socialists to decide the question of the formation of executive bodies of power in such important regions as Tuscany and Umbria, not within the framework of the "Centre-Left" coalition, but through agreement with the ICP and the ISPPU. At the end of June, by agreement between the ICP, ISP and ISPPU, the chairmen of these bodies were elected: a Communist in Umbria, and a Socialist in Tuscany.

Thus, three regions in central Italy are governed by the united Left: Tuscany, Umbria and Emilia-Romagna. The ICP and the ISPPU have an absolute majority in the regional parliament of the latter. These three regions have a population of about eight million and well-developed industry and agriculture.

It should be noted that the ISP achieved substantial successes in these elections, having conducted a polemic campaign against the Rightist line of the CDP and the USP, rejected anti-communist extremism and supported the struggle and movement for the unity of the working people, even if within the framework of the contradictory general policies of the "Centre-Left."

The ICP, which contested the elections under the slogan of unity of all democratic forces, consolidated the positions won in the 1968 parliamentary elections. The ISPPU, which reaffirmed its active role in the fight for the cohesion of the Left opposition forces, considerably improved its position compared with the previous municipal elections.

The elections of June 7, 1970, were an indisputable victory for the forces of democracy. New positive elements and possibilities appeared in the general political situation in the country. One of the most important of these elements is the Socialists' new orientation on extending cooperation with the Communists, which will certainly contribute a great deal towards the unity of the working class in its struggle for democratic reform.

● The experience of the working class movement in Italy, France, Finland and other capitalist coun-

tries confirms that unity of action benefits both the Communist and Socialist Parties and, what is the main thing, the working class. Socialist-Communist unity of action is already producing appreciable results. But on the whole it is not yet developing as vigorously and on as large a scale as necessary. Concerted efforts on the part of both the Socialist and Communist Parties are needed for working-class unity to grow and gain strength.

"Communists, who attribute decisive importance to working-class unity, are in favour of cooperation with the Socialists and Social Democrats to establish an advanced democratic regime today and to build a socialist society in the future," the 1969 International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties declared in its Document. "They will do everything they can to carry out this cooperation. To advance on this path, it is, of course, necessary for the Socialist Parties and other political organizations favouring socialism resolutely to break with the policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie and to pursue a policy of effective struggle for peace, democracy and socialism."¹

¹ *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties*, pp. 24-25.